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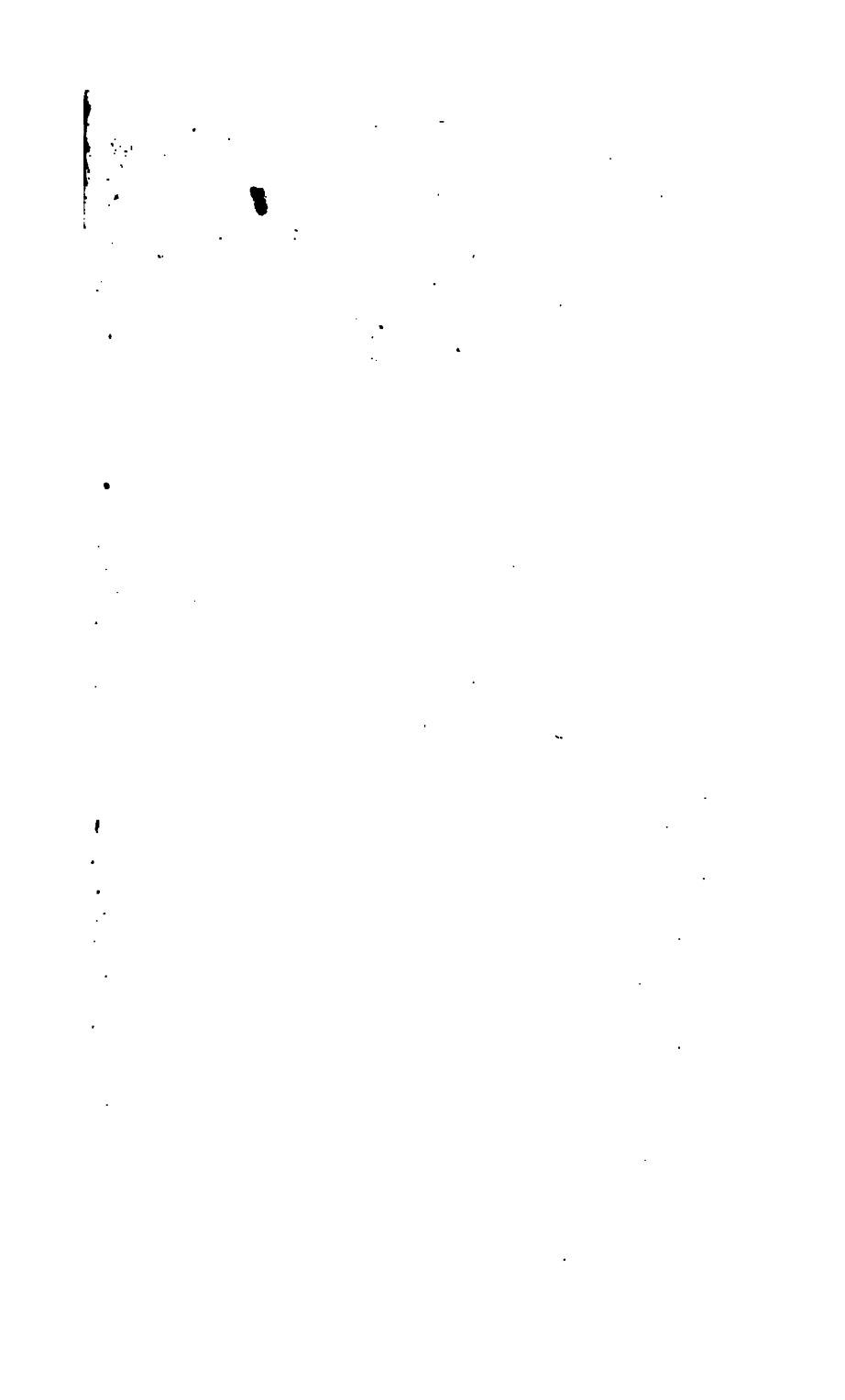




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SIR PHILIP GASTENEYS.

L O N D O N :

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SIR PHILIP GASTENEYS:

A MINOR,

BY

SIR ROGER GRESLEY, BART.

L O N D O N :

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

110.

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P R E F A C E.

My object in compiling these Memoirs is ostensible enough : I wish to deter young men of family and fortune from pursuing the track of Sir Philip Gasteneys.

The characters and incidents are purely

fictitious. I state this distinctly, so that should any one be absurd enough to think otherwise, he may enjoy his conceit at leisure.

But though the story as a whole be fabulous, I do not mean to deny that in some of the scenes I have availed myself of events which I have either witnessed or heard of in real life.

I have affixed my name to it, not from any motive of vanity—since I do not expect to derive any credit from it—but because I am not conscious of having written any

thing of which I ought to be ashamed: and I neither understand nor admire the specious modesty of those who, although they are universally known as the authors of a work, indulge in the affectation of withholding their names from its title page, until they have ascertained whether the voice of public opinion be in their favour.

ROGER GRESLEY.

Paris, March 25th, 1829.

SIR PHILIP GASTENEYS.

SIR PHILIP GASTENEYS was the only son of a family which traced its origin from the Conquest. A tedious disease, the offspring of dissipation, brought his father to an early grave, and left Sir Philip at an age of infantine weakness to the care of a mother, whose affection was superior to her judgment.

It was on this account that Lady Gasteneys resolved to educate her son at home. Anxious in maternal solicitude, she could not bear the thought of even momentary separation from her beloved child. With no feeling, no wish but what was turned towards his prosperity, she resolved to dedicate her life to his interests and sacrifice her own enjoyments to his welfare. Happy had it been if the event had answered her designs !

But, as might naturally have been expected, it was far otherwise. At the age of fifteen, as the sequel of this history will shew, the indulgence or the misjudgment of his mother had made Sir Philip his own master. He no longer brooked au-

thority or submitted to restraint. The control which others should have had over him was dispensed with, and his own passions were as yet too green and strong to admit of his having any over himself. At this dangerous age, when he should have been bound in the swaddling clothes of education, he assumed the garb of fashion, and with a figure not contemptible, with a mind not inferior to common ability, with natural elegance, acquired accomplishments and a good heart, Sir Philip entered into a malicious and voluptuous world. Possessing the power, when he was endued with the will of pleasing in an eminent degree, the rank and fortune of Sir Philip Gasteneys soon furnished him with friends, with flatterers and with

partisans. Regent of the sphere in which he moved, with nothing to restrain his passions and every thing to feed his vanity, Sir Philip esteemed his consequence by the rule of his pride, and measured his importance by the span of his ambition. With vanity enough to be aware of his attractions, and without fortitude sufficient to resist temptation, he easily fell into the snares that surrounded him. Having no real intention, no innate predisposition to be wicked, he committed every species of vice, because he could not abandon one object of gratification: but to the pliancy of his mind and the softness of his disposition, not to any natural depravity of heart, his errors must be attributed; from inability to repel the

first impulse of desire, he trod in the steps of folly till he entered the path of guilt, and ran through a rapid succession of offences, the growing enormity and fatal consequences of which finally weighed upon his conscience and restored him, with repentance, to happiness and peace.

But the passion which led Sir Philip astray more fatally than any other was his inordinate love of women. Sprung from a father who had sacrificed his reputation and his health to his sensual appetite, he inherited in no ordinary degree this infirmity of the flesh ; and the mode in which he had been educated, increased rather than diminished the natural defect that was implanted in him. The intense ardour of his feelings

and the romantic character of his imagination drew him towards the female sex by an instinctive impulse. His passion was gratified by their charms; his vanity was flattered by overcoming their scruples :— and though in the elements of his amours he shunned the idea of injuring innocence, and would have rejected with abhorrence the perfidious arts which he afterwards employed in the more advanced stages of his dissipation, he became a melancholy instance of the certainty with which, when once the reins of discipline are relaxed, we proceed from trifling indulgences to seductive folly, and from seductive folly to irremediable crime.

An extravagance that knew no bounds

when employed upon himself, a generosity unlimited towards those whom he esteemed, were likewise two features very strongly marked in the opening character of Sir Philip Gasteneys; and they too were links which connected him more closely with error and misfortune. They drew around him a set of senseless rakes, whose pleasure consisted in prodigality, and needy sycophants, whose only object was to profit by the ruin they contributed to make. A novice in delusion and unversed in the mysteries of worldliness, with all the notions of a man, Sir Philip had not the prudence of a child.

Amid the circle of pleasures to which he was early introduced, it is natural to sup-

pose that, with such a temperament of mind as I have described, Sir Philip would be ambitious to distinguish himself. It did not suit his aspiring disposition to shine as an inferior star in the hemisphere of gaiety and folly; and fully aware of his decided superiority over the greater part of his contemporaries, he bent all the energy of those abilities, which, if exerted in a more meritorious cause, would have gained him reputation, to the race of fashion and pleasure which he resolved to run.

It is not then surprising that, in process of time, Sir Philip Gasteneys should have learnt the art of seduction (for so it may be termed) in its most perfect state. Accustomed always to try his powers upon

some new object, and delighted with a fresh pursuit, he knew every channel, every secret winding of the female heart, every palpitation of the breast, every emotion of the countenance, every tone of the voice. He could mark with undeviating accuracy every stage, and the minutest progress in every stage of the pending conflict between vice and virtue. He knew precisely what measures to adopt according to the character of her whom he wished to conquer, and he could calculate with certainty upon the proportionate success of his attempts. He was the deepest reader of the hearts of others; the most profound dissembler of his own.

Stained, however, as the escutcheon of

Sir Philip's character certainly was by many blemishes, it still was blazoned by numerous virtues. It proclaimed him to be a noble knight, of a fair and captivating exterior, ever without fear, but not always without reproach. Thus, though he was passionate, he was generous and forgiving; though impetuous, firm; though fickle in his choice, never cruel nor ungrateful in his change. The failings of Sir Philip, for they were not radical defects, were the failings of an ingenuous nature, too early worked upon by the machinations of the world. He was like the young oak in the plantation, which for want of a protecting fence, is blasted in its tender growth by the boisterous winds, or nipped in its branches by the browsing herd: the spirit was good,

but the flesh was weak. Throughout his life he was never known to commit crime from the love of vice—but from the frailty of nature; his errors, great as they were, always commanded pity, though they drew forth reprobation; and he was one of those enviable sinners who, like the son of Brutus, irresistibly excite esteem, at the very moment that they incur condemnation.

Thus far have we drawn the outline of a character which may, at first sight, appear somewhat unintelligible. The lights of virtue and the shades of vice, which illumined and obscured Sir Philip's conduct, may seem not to blend easily with each other, even if they be not totally irreconcilable. But their combination is

simple and natural ; Sir Philip erred not more than many others, but his feelings were more acute, his sense of rectitude more strong than theirs, so that he erred with greater reluctance and magnified his errors by their very contrast with his virtues. The faithful detail we shall give of his life, whilst a minor, will enable the reader to be his own judge how far good predominated over evil in his disposition, and consequently, how much he was entitled to esteem and commiseration, rather than odium and censure.

The period at which we shall introduce Sir Philip to the more intimate acquaintance of our readers was at the time when he was fifteen years of age. At that epoch Lady

Gasteneys took him to London. It was his first visit to the metropolis, and he went there knowing, at his extreme youth, a great deal, and predisposed to know a great deal more. He had run through all the courses of juvenile pleasure which his hitherto confined sphere of action had afforded him, and he was anxious and prepared for a more extensive arena on which to indulge his inclination and gratify his vanity. The remonstrances of maternal solicitude had therefore no weight with him ; and as what advice could not effect, Lady Gasteneys never employed more vigorous measures to accomplish, he gave way to all his humours and ran wild and riot about the town. In a short time he was the watchman's proverb and the prostitutes' idol ;

he knew all their haunts and was initiated into all their mysteries.

But this promiscuous profligacy was not adapted to the elegance of his mind nor the delicacy of his feeling:—he had given in to it, at first, from the buoyancy of his spirits, and been led into it farther by the ardour and impetuosity of his disposition—for whatever he followed, he pursued to the end. He had now begun to grow weary of these dishonourable campaigns; he found that there was no merit in victory where there was no opposition to surmount; and was ashamed of laurels that were won without strife and worn without envy.

With these impressions he left London,

for the state of Lady Gasteneys' health induced her, in compliance with the advice of her physician, to repair to one of the most fashionable watering places in the west of England. Her arrival, or rather that of Sir Philip soon became known, and as soon brought visitors, compliments, and invitations to her door. The young Baronet soon found himself in the centre of every thing that was agreeable and gay; forgetting past pleasures he began to look out for new ones, and it was not long before an acquaintance, which he formed with a family who took the lead in the fashionable circle of the place, furnished him with the opportunity.

The head of this family was an old gen-

tleman of humble capacity and good disposition—one who thought well of every body, but much better than any body of himself — courted good society to gratify his pride, and tolerated bad to display his importance. Prejudiced people will, of course, conjecture that he was a Scotchman.

His wife was a shrewd, intelligent, intriguing woman of noble connexion, accomplished mind, subtle understanding, corrupt heart and fascinating manners. Her whole thoughts were bent upon worldly objects. Thus, with a ruined husband, her study was to appear rich ; with a profligate family, it was her policy to seem virtuous : she paid that respect to the world which it

nominally required, and granted to it the indulgence which it secretly wished.

This lady and gentleman had a large family of daughters. The two eldest were spinsters who had worried the whole troop of their male acquaintance for the last fifteen years without effect. They had danced, and sung, and drawn in pencil, and cut out figures with their scissors, and all to no purpose, for they were diabolically ugly, without being proportionately chaste or adequately rich.

These ladies were certainly not very well calculated to make any impression on Sir Philip Gasteneys; yet they nevertheless attempted it. There was another, however,

and a younger child, who, possessing many personal charms, was divested of most of her sisters' mental defects : she was not beautiful, but she was young and engaging; her heart was pure and her feelings were strong.

Sir Philip was introduced to her at a ball. He danced with her the whole evening, and promised to call on her the next morning. This conduct did not pass unobserved by Mrs. Loudon, and accordingly in expectation of his visit, the whole artillery of intrigue and seduction was brought to play upon Sir Philip. The room was filled with the most fashionable visitors who had been got together under some pretence to hear a child's debut upon the piano ; letters and cards were laid carelessly upon

the table, which had been scraped together and religiously preserved as relics to excite the attention, respect and credulity of fashionable visitors. From these, extracts were to be read, intimacies proved, and claims of importance to be drawn with a degree of care, and accident, and indifference, the acquirement of which had cost infinite trouble and produced the most contemptible results. Works of art, the humble specimens of aspirants after fame, were to be shewn as proofs of patronage conferred and taste consulted.

All this had been studiously and ingeniously devised, by the time Sir Philip made his appearance ; he was received with easy and affected coolness. The conver-

sation was artfully conducted : the old gentleman praised his talent, the old lady exaggerated his fortune, and the younger hags, whispered audibly to each other of his beauty. But Amelia was missing ; she had been purposely kept out of the way, and in answer to his inquiries after her, he was told that she had suffered from the ball and was confined by a slight cold to her apartments. Sir Philip was too young to see through the trick, or to hide his disappointment, and after half an hour's vain endeavours to be pleased, he went away evidently vexed.

This was precisely what Mrs. Loudon expected, and what she desired. She had now found the way to Sir Philip's weakness, and

she was not one of those who fail to improve an opportunity. Accordingly he very soon received an invitation to dine at Brierly, such was the name of Mrs. Loudon's habitation. The house was pleasantly situated and was certainly improved and decorated by the taste of its owner. In short, it was a pretty place enough ; especially to one who went there with tender inclinations.

Sir Philip accepted the invitation. The dinner was good, the company select, and Amelia in her best attire : but who sat next her at the table ? Not Sir Philip Gasteneys ; Mrs. Loudon knew that the way to excite passions, is to oppose them : she had already discovered the quick sensibi-

lity of Sir Philip's heart and she very wisely resolved to irritate it. She therefore contrived to place him next herself and a very handsome young man next her daughter. Opportunities were not wanting, and none were thrown away of praising Amelia, and still more of extolling the young gentleman who sat by her, ignorant of the part Mrs. Loudon was imposing on him ; but above all, she threw out numerous hints to Sir Philip of his rank and the splendour of his fortune ; presumed to take an interest in his welfare, and cautioned his young and inexperienced mind against the snares that would be laid for him by artful persons of both sexes ; and the attempts that would be made to inveigle him who could command any woman

in the world, and ought to marry the best.

The natural dignity of Sir Philip's mind made him dislike, and his extreme acuteness caused him to suspect Mrs. Loudon's motives: but his reigning impulse was not to be overcome by premature apprehensions and he thought he should be a match for Mrs. Loudon. He did not therefore stop to enquire the consequences or the end of his designs; but after dinner, approached and fixed his whole attention on Amelia. From cautious admiration he proceeded to the most enthusiastic expressions of passion, and in the course of the evening convinced her, in language which she had never before heard of the exis-

tence of feelings which she had long desired to excite.

In this way several days passed, and each tended to strengthen their young hearts in mutual attachment. The farther he advanced, the more he desired to go on ; Amelia was amiable, fond and innocent, yet how could he marry her ? it was absolutely impossible ; yet how could he forsake her ? it was equally so. His mother and guardians, nay his own pride and ambition would oppose the one ; his love, his vanity, his sense of honour and good feeling rejected the other. That Amelia loved him, that he could triumph over her weakness was certain ; but he would not willingly encourage the thought of doing her premeditated wrong.

Thus they went on entangling each others hearts and deriving from it no gratification but the consciousness of being mutually beloved, till the time arrived for Lady Gasteneys' departure. Sir Philip was now sixteen; a mere boy in every body's estimation but his own. Can the firmness of manhood be expected at such an age, or principle be supposed to triumph over nature? On the night before Lady Gasteneys' departure the young lovers were to meet at a ball. Who shall describe their happiness at the present scene, their anguish at the idea that it would close so soon? In Sir Philip's disposition there was a certain degree of melancholy, not unfrequently united with an ardent temperament. He saw Amelia for the last time; her kindness,

her innocence, her present fondness, her humble hope, raised his feelings to the very highest pitch of emotion, and completely superseded all the thoughts of gaiety, the instigations of pride and the demands of fashion. He felt as though he were her slave, and was not ashamed to wear her chains ; he devoted himself to her as to only one object which connected him with the scene around him. His politeness, his gaiety, his wit, were all absorbed in one feeling of deep abstracted devotion.

The whole assembly remarked this behaviour, and Mrs. Loudon congratulated herself, and was congratulated by others upon the probable success of her measures ; for though Sir Philip's youth prevented any

immediate advantage from being taken of his feelings, she trusted to her daughter's charms, to his good principles, and, above all, to her own abilities, to direct them in the same channel till he should be his own master. With this view, she resolved to implicate Sir Philip as deeply as she possibly could with her daughter's name and reputation, and to plunge him into an abyss from which, she hoped, he would be unable to extricate himself.

On returning from the ball it so happened, or was so arranged, that Sir Philip went alone in the carriage with Amelia. The distance they had to go was about three miles, and they arrived at home some time before the rest of the party. Sir

Philip was at the highest point of enthusiasm: he sat beside a being young, tender, and passionate as himself. It was perhaps the first time he had ever loved; the first that he had ventured to declare his passion to a virtuous and unsuspecting mind. He drew near Amelia and told her that it might perhaps be the last time he should ever see her. He painted his adoration in glowing colours; bewailed his fate in terms of the most poignant anguish; vowed everlasting devotion, and humbly but fervently sued for some proof of affection; some token of undisguised feeling in return. Can the sensitive plant be indifferent to the touch? Could female tenderness resist such an appeal?

The bonds of principle were broken, and Sir Philip, for the first time in his life, tasted the cup of unadulterated joy.

He threw himself on his couch after he reached home in a state of mind which he had never before experienced. He had to struggle between love and duty—interest and passion. The one pressed him not to desert a girl whose affections and happiness were in his hands; the other not to abandon a mother whose existence depended upon his choice. The one told him that he should be ruined in his worldly interests by any honourable connexion with Amelia; the other, that there was nothing in the world worth caring for but her.

With these thoughts he passed a restless and miserable night; sleep never visited his eyes—repose never quieted his aching heart. The morning came, and with it the bustle and preparation of departure. The decision must be made; he thought of his mother—of Amelia—last and least of all, of himself: the conflict was long and severe; and if he decided wrongly, it was with the intention of acting rightly.


He tore himself from the shrine of his idolatry—from the temple of his adorations; he abandoned all his pleasure and his passions—renounced his triumph, and retired into exile. He knew very well, that had he acted otherwise, he would only

have exposed the frailty of Amelia, without the power of repairing it.

This was a powerful effort for so young and impetuous a mind; and it cost Sir Philip many an hour and night of wretchedness and regret. Before he left her he had arranged the means of carrying on a secret correspondence with Amelia, and his first care was to take advantage of it. He poured forth the agony and ardour of his whole soul: wept over his absence, and promised to return. His anxiety to receive an answer to this letter may be felt by those who have been in a similar situation. He counted the hours, and accused the post of delay; searched the letter-bag, and blamed the cruelty of Amelia. Thus five

days elapsed, and in truth he had good reason to be apprehensive lest some accident should have occurred in the conveyance or delivery of the letter. By Amelia's instruction it had been addressed to Mrs. Loudon's maid, and he almost began to suspect the fidelity of the one and the arts of the other. At length the agony of doubt was over: the gentleman, his friend, who had consented to receive Amelia's letter under cover to himself, brought him one marked in the corner with the initials they had agreed on.

Amelia wrote to him in all the warmth and freshness of a young and unsuspecting heart. She depicted her wretchedness—but doubted not his truth; longed for his



presence — but did not reproach him for his absence. With all the delicacy of early passion she told Sir Philip how entirely she was devoted to him ; but left to his own feelings the decision of her fate ; and if he consulted her present at the expense of her future happiness, it is not to be wondered at. Sir Philip soon found opportunities of visiting her unknown either to her parents or his own, and the surreptitious moments, thus occasionally occupied, were productive of enjoyment to themselves and of distress to no one.

Sir Philip had laid it down as a principle, which nothing ever induced him to violate, not to be the active cause of betraying his

own errors, or those into which he had involuntarily thrown others. Though he had not sufficient command over his passions as to forego gratification with those who were willing to afford it to him, whilst at the same time they participated in it themselves, yet he would no longer continue that indulgence if it were to interrupt the tranquillity or destroy the peace of an innocent party. The moment, therefore, that any circumstance occurred which compelled him either to abandon his pursuit or to expose it, his conduct was never dubious. It was this consideration for others, rather than for himself, which divested his amours in many instances of the wretched consequences which frequently attend such indul-

gences and made him appear to the world, and in some measure to his own mind, more innocent than in reality he was.

Under existing circumstances, Sir Philip although more strongly tempted than he had ever yet been, determined to conform to this resolution.

Lady Gasteneys, discovering probably how little influence a tutor in her own house possessed over her self-willed and giddy son, and alarmed by the representations and persuaded by the advice of her best friends, had determined on removing the young Baronet to a private tutor's at a considerable distance from her own residence, and had some time previously an-

nounced her intention to him. The day had now arrived when Sir Philip Gasteneys had to be launched upon a different sea ; and as novelty and adventure were always agreeable to him, the only regret he experienced was the loss of his Amelia, any future approach to whom would, by this measure, be rendered utterly impracticable. To this, however, aware of the impossibility of doing otherwise without exposing her, he quietly submitted, and with his grief and his secret buried in his bosom, transported himself to his new abode.

But it would be wronging him to suppose that he forgot her ; for though he never saw her again, and though shortly after-

wards the measure of her frailty and misery was full and she paid the penalty of it by her death, he loved her to the very last.

The rectory, for it was one, to which Sir Philip Gasteneys was removed, was situated in a secluded vale in one of the most retired counties in England. There was no habitation near it, save of the farmer or the peasant; and no occupation to be found but in the study of nature or of books. A clear little trout stream ran at the bottom of the garden, inviting the patient angler to an hour's recreation; and the old gothic church with its burial ground which stood hard by, seemed to remind the inmates of the parsonage of their duties in this world and their proximity to the next.

The clergyman, to whose care he was entrusted, was a mild, amiable and most accomplished man. Learned without pedantry, correct without squeamishness, and strict without harshness in his discipline, his life was one perpetual effort after virtue. He knew very well that he must bear the cross before he could wear the crown, and endeavoured, by the discharge of temporal duties, to gain a title to eternal pleasures.

Sir Philip soon acquired under his direction, a greater fondness for literary pursuits of which he had always been enamoured, and greater steadiness in his application to them. He poured over the pages of ancient and of modern learning with equal and increasing ardour. The

classics were not allowed to engross all the fine energies of his mind, and divert it from more useful and necessary attainments ; the sciences were not forgotten ; the arts not neglected, nor were the sports and pleasures of the field forbidden or despised.

He made a rapid progress in improvement, and it was to Mr. Townshend that he owed that cultivation of his talents which he afterwards attained. Sir Philip Gasteneys, prone to love every thing amiable, soon learnt to love his tutor, and to make his tutor love him. Accustomed in a short time to the solitude and tranquillity of the scene, and learning almost to forget, and ceasing gradually to desire pleasures which

no longer presented themselves, he found himself more happy when shooting yellow-hammers in the fields and playing at bagatelle with his tutor's boy, as relaxations from his more serious pursuits, than ever he had been amid the noise and bustle of the world.

His existence passed on satisfactorily; his mind was settling on better things, his views were beginning to extend themselves to spheres of usefulness and distinction. Mr. Townshend soon discovered the peculiar tastes and inclinations of his young pupil, and by adapting his studies to them, rather than endeavouring to direct them in a less congenial channel, he effected a rapid progress in his improvement.

His moral and intellectual qualities derived equal benefit from his tuition ; and when, after a period of twelve months, Sir Philip was removed from Longfield, I believe that his heart was as uncorrupted, his original feelings were as amiable, and his principles of honour and rectitude as just as could be desired.

I have refrained from entering into an account of some transactions which, as might be expected, occurred to Sir Philip during his residence at Longfield. It is not to be supposed that he had forgotten to love, though the object of his affections be not revealed. Love in a garret is for the most part uninteresting ; and scenes of agrarian courtship are unworthy of detail. Certain it

is, that if he occasionally transformed himself into a Daphnis, he never wanted a Chloe; nor were initials on the bark the only memorandum which he left behind him of his name. It was during this period, indeed, that he first beheld the being who influenced a great portion of his future life, but whose history we shall not for the present relate.

Less interesting adventures, in the transaction of which, no feelings nor circumstances were involved but what accompany the most ordinary course, need not detain us, so we will pass on to his introduction to College.

He was entered as a gentleman commoner at Christ Church, and found himself

in a circle of young men superior to him in rank, inferior to him in present wealth, and both superior and inferior to him in ability and information. Amongst these he formed many acquaintances—scarcely one friend. The private education which he had received, made him suspicious of others, and others suspicious of him. In the untutored openness of his disposition, he would have abandoned himself to them without disguise ; but though not as mistrustful as he was taught afterwards to become, he still had seen enough to know that some restraint must necessarily be imposed on his genuine feelings.

Besides, Sir Philip Gasteneys was proud ; the blood of eight centuries of ancestors

did not flow in him in vain ; and though he was a commoner himself, he recollected that his forefathers had been noble. Thus he felt deeply what he conceived to be the slightest indignity, and sought in the expenditure of more money, and the conscious satisfaction which he felt in his own abilities and acquirements, to raise himself to a level with the most distinguished of his associates.

But this conduct was not calculated to render him popular ; and there was besides at this time, a system of subserviency and flattery to men of the highest rank from their inferiors, established at Christ Church, which the generous and high-spirited nature of Sir Philip Gasteneys utterly despised. From his

very infancy, he spurned every thing which infants generally seek ; from his cradle he was a man in inclinations and ideas ; and when he found (as he did) these important boys investing their juvenile fancies with the forms of political institutions, and affixing to their private life the regulations and habits of the statesman, he felt a contempt for such mummery, which he could not, and did not endeavour to conceal.

His disposition too was gay, his spirits were young and ardent. The melancholy which formed a principal ingredient in his character had, as yet, lain undisturbed at the bottom of his heart ; disappointment and guilt, and self reproach had not yet called it into action ; life and all its charms, its

sunshine without its showers, were before him; he felt capable of enjoyment, willing to share it with, and impart it to others: and he rejected with disgust, the cold and artificial system which, about that time, was beginning to turn our once prodigal young heirs into misers, our gallants into saints, and our boyish rakes into book-worms. For him, *such* a fashionable mania had no charms, and as he would not conform to it for all the inducements which its votaries could offer, he set himself vigorously against it. He marched proudly by those whose principles he knew to be at variance with his own, and made himself the centre of his own circle; they who chose to enter it were welcome—where he liked, he liked truly—and where he hated, it was without disguise.

Sir Philip, amused with the novelty of his situation, passed the first year of his college life contentedly enough ; he had the best horses, the gayest parties, and was the highest player of his day. His studies, to which he at first applied himself, gradually became neglected ; his own taste led him to the cultivation of history, philosophy and the fine arts, subjects which are for the most part neglected in the prescribed course of a college education. All thoughts of a degree were of course abandoned ; and temporary gratification of mind and body became his principal and ruling desire.

It was after he had been there about a year, that he went to see his mother,

who was residing at his paternal mansion. This abode of his ancestors was such as might have been expected from the nature of his descent : it had been founded in ages long gone by, and had survived through various epochs to the present hour ; unchanged in the great features of its original design, but enlarged, altered and added to according to the prevailing fashion of the day, the wants or caprices of its owners, and the skill or inability of their architects ; but it was still to the eye of the most ignorant observer, what it originally and all along had been—the domestic residence of a powerful and distinguished family. The Norman arch, with its billet and nebule, its zigzag and fret, the lancet window, the tapering pinnacle with

its roses, its tracery and its crockets, proclaimed the successive age of its many and various masters, whilst the numerous escutcheons in stone, in oak, in plaister and in glass, on the walls, the friezes, the ceilings and the windows, accompanied with occasional mottoes and moral sentences, exhibited at once the splendour of their alliances, their loyalty to the king, and their devotion to God.

But by far the greater and most habitable part of this venerable mansion stood now, as it was built in the reign of the virtuous and virgin queen. The low, large, square pannelled, old oak doors, embossed with nails, still swung upon their rusty and time-worn hinges. In the great hall, the beams

and rafters displayed their cobwebbed and gigantic forms. The dais, with its long, narrow, solid table, still occupied its old position, but no longer groaned under its pewter dishes and enormous joints. The gallery was there, but the minstrels and musicians were all departed to their long home; and the iron manacle was still attached to the wall, although there was no refractory guest or temperate domestic to undergo its pains.*

* In those days, reversing the moral order of things in these saintish times, sobriety was considered a vice and drunkenness a virtue. This passage alludes to the prevailing custom of confining any one by the hand to the wall, on his knees, who refused to drink the accustomed quantity of ale, and in that position pouring the remainder down his sleeve.

One side of this vast and interesting pile was occupied by a gallery; the family portraits, from the first dawn of painting to the bright era of Sir Joshua, were ranged in regular succession, and the broad light of day gleamed from the wide oriel windows on the loyal and euphuistic knight of Elizabeth, and the Cavalier and Round-head of Cromwell and of Charles. At right angles to this were the gable ends, the turrets and the vanes, the lable and the railing, and the demi-Grecian, demi-gothic arabesques, with the belted columns and the carved pilasters of a somewhat later period. Every style that was old and venerable, and English seemed there to have found a safe and natural asylum, while only two modern casements, in an obscure angle of this

majestic building, appeared to indicate, that the rude hand of innovation had been paralyzed in its impious attempts.

It was fortunate for its future fate, and for all lovers of antiquity, that Sir Philip Gasteneys, in inheriting the possessions, succeeded likewise to the spirit and taste of their forefathers. On these vestiges of former magnificence and grandeur, he had always looked with a childish affection; and sincere was the admiration which he felt at surveying the pannelled wainscoats, the arras hangings, and the buhl and marble which more recent but admirable taste had imparted from the ruined chateaux of monarchical France, and the dilapidated palaces of classic Italy, and intermixed

with the ancient specimen of our more homely and less costly national furniture.

In this respect, indeed, in its interior decorations, Canningsbury Hall was a complete model. All the productions, the choicest specimens of art and ingenuity, seemed to rival each other by their opposing beauty, and yet to harmonize in the most attractive union. Bronzes and ivory carvings, the choicest works of Cellini and Fiamingo, ebony and oak, japan and marqueterie, sculpture and painting, nielli, agemina, and tarsia porcelain from the Indies; Dresden and Sevres, all exhibited their individual and emulous pretensions, yet all seemed bound in a close and beautiful alliance.

Nor had the taste which prevailed over the building deserted the grounds of Canningsbury. The same genius seemed to have held the reins of nature and of art : and in the disposal and arrangement of its walks, its shrubberies, its slips, its gardens, and parterres, to have availed itself with consummate skill of the rich and various materials at its disposal. At the bottom of a smooth green lawn, on which lay a formal and luxurious flower-garden, (like a rich coronet of gems upon a velvet cushion), flowed a full and majestic river. Above its banks, the masculine and venerable cedar, the elegant cypress, the melancholy arbor-vitæ and the gloomy yew, mingled their branches with the oak, the elm, the

sycamore and the beech. There was not a shrub, which wealth or curiosity could procure, or ingenuity propagate, whose peculiar property was not judiciously consulted, or form or foliage advantageously displayed. The walks, which occasionally went in straight and protracted lengths through groves of fir or avenues of lime, and occasionally relaxed from their stiff and old fashioned attitudes, into the more graceful sinuosities of the modern school, were neither too sprucely trimmed, nor too affectedly neglected — neither terminated abruptly, nor continued needlessly — neither geometrically formed, nor coiled in circles like a snake.

Here and there, too, in appropriate situa-

tions and at convenient distances, the wanderer in this elysium was invited to shelter himself from the sun, or save himself from the shower; or on the open seat to repose awhile from the search, and meditate upon the sight of beauties yet unexplored or already investigated; or if weary of the objects immediately around him, and ambitious of surveying the face of nature afar, he might ascend the steps of some lofty tower, and, travelling with his eye almost as far as with his imagination, gaze upon the vast expanse of the surrounding scenery.

The bath, too, was here, where the visitor might cool his feverish limbs; the boat-house whence he might embark with the

gay breeze ; the tackle and apparatus with which to pursue that amusement which Johnson describes as the recreation of the fool ; but there were no busts without names, nor statues with wrong ones ; no introduction of fabulous gods to outrage the majesty of the God of nature ; no monuments to dogs, no tablets for epitaphs, no quotations from the classics, no scraps from the muse, no nymphs with urns without water, nor rock-work upon sand. It seemed as if these puerilities had not entered into the manly notions of Sir Philip's progenitors, nor were the older but more impressive absurdities of the Dutch gardeners imitated or allowed. The clipped firs and architectural hedges had either never existed or not been suf-

ferred to continue. The tortures and conceits once practised upon nature, had been banished; art was not permitted to caricature her rival; and though there were vases and bowers, and fountains and grottoes since the nature of the soil admitted of them, there was nothing displaced, nothing extravagant; nothing which the most critical could condemn or the most fastidious reject.

Sir Philip drove through the stately beeches, and a long avenue of oaks on the banks of the beautiful river, which flowed through his park, until he alighted at the hall door. The deer gathered in herds, as if to welcome him; the labourer rested on his spade, and the old grey-headed porter

drew back the massive and trusty bolt to give admittance to his young master. The gorgeous rays of a setting sun gleamed through the painted casements, and shone upon the old suits of armour, and the implements of war and of the chase which hung against the walls ; trophies of less degenerate days. Sir Philip passed along the darkly polished and uncovered boards, and with a joyous countenance entered the library. On its shelves was ranged a choice and complete collection of the classics ; of works in every branch of history, and particularly of the British ; of the fine arts, and of literature, and poetry in the English, French and Italian languages. But its greatest treasures were in the fine

arts, and the history of the middle ages, and the revival of literature. From the days of Alberti and Leonardo, to those of Palladio and Sir Joshua; and from the epoch of fiction and romance under Arthur and Charlemagne, to the splendid realities of Elizabeth and Leo, there was scarcely a work or a treatise, a Conte, or a Fa-bliau, which could not be produced in its original and quaint costume to gratify the taste and curiosity of the artist, the research of the antiquary, or the imagination of the poet. A rich cabinet of medals, gems and coins, ancient and modern; and a numerous collection of engravings from Finiguerra to Morghen afforded their valuable illustrations to these stores of knowledge and productions of

learning; whilst the busts of painters, sculptors and architects, historians, philosophers and poets, ranged in chronological order around the apartment, seemed placed there, as if to inspire respect to their memory, and guard their labour from abuse.

On entering the room, Sir Philip found it occupied by a lady whom he instantly recognised. When quite a boy, he had first become acquainted with her at the house of a friend where she was staying, and it was then that she made that impression upon his young heart, which time and circumstances afterwards confirmed. She was single, young, beautiful, attractive. Her delicate and tender

feelings harmonized with his own. There was a playfulness and simplicity in her disposition, an innocent childishness in her manner, which won his youthful affections and excited his rising sensibilities. They were thrown for some time together : they used to walk and play, and talk together of love, without either of them scarcely knowing what it meant : but its ways, though secret, are easily unravelled, and so Sir Philip found it.

The night before she was to depart, she went into his chamber to bid him farewell : she kissed him, and he kissed her, as in innocence apparently to all around they might well do, but felt what no one but

themselves could either suspect or know ; their hearts were silently plighted to each other : their affections tacitly exchanged.

That night Sir Philip Gasteneys, whose mind was naturally given to devotion, and who, invariably, under circumstances of despair or hope addressed his petition or his thanks to God, put up a prayer to the Supreme Being for her happiness, and vowed to her eternal and devoted love.

He kept his oath. That night she gave him a purse, the work of her own hands, which with other relics of her affection, he has faithfully preserved to this hour. The next morning he surveyed her room : he threw himself upon her yet

warm but deserted bed : he walked where she had walked, and sat down where she had rested.

Were not these the symptoms of passion belonging to his age ? and was it not an age when passions, once strongly excited, are not easily subdued ?

From that time he never beheld her again till she was married ; but he did not forget her. It was by accident he met her, about a year after her marriage, with her husband, with whom he had been previously acquainted. He was now older and more versed in the mysteries of love. He put all his young science into practice. She suspected him of no harm : she could

accuse him of no boldness ; what seemed innocent, at first became dangerous upon investigation. But the seed had been already sown, and though she knew not what fruit it might produce, she would be compelled to pluck it.

He left her with the full secret of his feelings and his hopes disclosed. The great barrier of virtue, the first and most important bulwark had been carried ; she had listened to his avowal : she could not obliterate it, she could not prevent its repetition. There were no projects to evade, no proposals to reject, no schemes to counteract : he only desired to love her—in secret, and to worship her—in silence.

Thus they parted: and Sir Philip Gasteneys had only once seen her afterwards, until now: it was whilst on a visit to her own house with his mother. The time was short, and unproductive of the result which Sir Philip ardently and indefatigably sought. Her love was not yet deep enough to overcome her duty.

Sir Philip was not aware, before his arrival at home, that Mr. and Mrs. Seton were there; and he was the more surprised at finding them as he had some reason for imagining that Lady Gasteneys was aware of the state of his feelings towards the latter: but mothers in these cases are generally indulgent; and, with all their love of virtue and recommendation of

morality, often second their sons in transactions which they would not be able to arrange without them.

Lady Gasteneys, however, need not be subject to this accusation ; her indiscretion, if indiscretion it were, proceeded probably from the confidence she reposed in her son's principles, or her ignorance of the determined nature of his passion.

He now seized the opportunity which fortune had developed to him, to prosecute his suit with Evelina ; and he made such gradual inroads upon her affection that she found her repose and tranquillity affected by it. Naturally of a gay and lively disposition, of strong and susceptible feelings,

he administered to her amusement by his wit, and attracted her admiration by his enthusiasm. He reminded her of the length of time during which he had known her, of the early days where he first loved her, of the hopes which he had formed of making her his wife, and which she had frustrated: of his enduring faith, of his helpless devotion.

Evelina had been educated by virtuous and sensible parents, had imbibed the most correct principles, and was endowed with the most amiable disposition; but she married, principally in compliance with her father's wishes, a man of whom she knew but little, who had never interested her much, and was not calculated to in-

terest her more. She was like a being who fixes his residence on the first spot which may present itself for convenience and comfort, wherein there may be nothing to admire, nor any thing to disgust, and who afterwards discovers that the surrounding neighbourhood possesses sites of infinite beauty and manifold attractions, which might have been as easily within his reach. What a mortification for him to discover that he must either now remain, where his hasty and inconsiderate choice had placed him, or transplant himself elsewhere with the loss of his original investment!

It was thus with Evelina ; she had bound herself to one whom she could not

now abandon, without the sacrifice of every thing most dear to woman ; yet she beheld in Sir Philip Gasteneys a man superior to her husband in birth, in fortune, in personal charms, in accomplishments, in temper, and she heard his solemn and daily protestations that he had destined her for his own. She reflected, she could not help reflecting, that she had been the destroyer of her own happiness as well as his : for she might have possessed him when it would have been no sin to love him, and she saw him now a defrauded suitor, not a base seducer at her feet, imploring from pity, what he might have gained from choice.

Nor was there any hypocrisy in these

representations on the part of Sir Philip Gasteneys. He was perfectly sincere in his admiration of her, and he believed, that had she been single he would not have hesitated to marry her. He convinced himself that he had a sort of right to her; and that since he could not obtain her in one way, it would be pardonable to do so in another.

The period of his visit to Canningsbury was now drawing to a close, and they were to return home. Mr. Seton, to repay in some measure, the civilities which he had received from Lady Gasteneys, and not dreaming of the attachment which subsisted between her son and his wife, invited Sir Philip to accompany them. Of this kind-

ness he was too happy to avail himself, for though he felt some remorse at the idea of thus making an unsuspecting husband contribute to his own ruin, yet he had not resolution enough to oppose himself to the proffered inducement.

They accordingly departed : Sir Philip full of tumultuous hope, Evelina of nervous joy, Mr. Seton of indifference and unconcern.

The journey was long and tedious, but to persons under the influence of such feelings as those of Sir Philip and Evelina, distance is imperceptible and delay gratifying. Mr. Seton's house was in —shire, in one of the wildest and most romantic tracts of that mountainous and chaotic region.

It was the remains of an old castle adapted, with considerable regard to consistency, to the wants of modern life. It was built upon a steep acclivity ; the sides of the wild hills which environed it, were hung over many a vast acre with dark impenetrable forests of their native fir, and for miles around with the thick and prickly furze. At the foot of the castle, through the grounds in devious and rugged course ran the little river Ila, here penetrating a secret channel under ground, and there emerging with triumphant impetus from beneath some massive rock to freshen with its glad and liberated waters the grassy and secluded plain.

In a green and woody amphitheatre,

stood a small and very ancient parish church. There were some few tombs and monumental tablets, recording with simple and unlettered affection, the virtues of the deceased and the regret of the survivors. It seemed to be a burial place in which the relics only of loveliness and innocence reposed ; one could not fancy that the sacredness and serenity of its clayey occupants were profaned by the corpses of guilty ambition or unpunished crime : the air within its precincts breathed only of humility and content. As you entered through the low and humble porch, round which the tenacious ivy had fastened its embrace for many a by-gone year, (strong to preserve, as the coils of the boa are to destroy,) you felt that it was a place con-

separated, not in name only, to piety and peace. The old carved oaken pulpit, the rudely sculptured stone front whose devices still savoured of the mysteries of paganism, and the empty niche where once, and for so many ages, stood the vessel of the holy water, recalled you to the very origin, and from the origin to the reformation of our Holy Church. One could not but sigh at the painted glass which was broken, the ornaments which were defaced, the tombstones which were stripped of their brazen effigies, victims alike of fanatic violence or puerile disport.

In one corner of the wall near the communion table, was a monument, two hundred years old, to a previous owner of the

estate. The epitaph on it concluded with this quaint and beautiful tribute to virtuous age :

“ Beloved he lived ; and died o’ercharged with years,
Fuller of honour than of silver hairs.”

In such a place as this, much gaiety was not to be expected ; and, as the carriage-wheels rolled over the ricketty and rattling draw-bridge, the heart, or at any rate, the spirits of Sir Philip Gasteneys abated somewhat of their natural elasticity. Some of the huge square towers with their hanging parapets, were in ruins ; the grass grew in the angles of the vast court, which once resounded to the hoofs of gallant steeds, and was filled with armed retainers ; and the raven now stretched its black

wings to the air, in which once had floated the standard of the Seton.

There was a report too, that the castle was haunted, which, added to the paucity of the neighbouring families, was a sufficient reason for its being little frequented by company. Mr. Seton was a hospitable man enough; that is to say, he always asked every body who called, to stay and dine with him, a custom not likely to ruin him, when the visitors came about once a month and nothing was added to the family dinner for their reception; but he had no idea of opening his house, or inviting company before hand; or making a party, or even giving what country people call an occasional *blow out*. The fatted

calf was very seldom killed, and when killed, very slowly eaten.

The principal, or rather the only amusements, were in the sports of the field. The moor and copses contained abundance of game ; the lakes and rivulets were full of fish ; and there was a pack of fox hounds and harriers in the neighbourhood. Mr. Seton himself was a great sportsman and occupied his whole time between hunting and shooting, coursing and farming, in all of which pursuits he thought himself infinitely superior to his neighbours.

Sir Philip Gasteneys certainly did not congratulate himself upon the change which he had made from his own elegant

and luxurious mansion, to this dreary and unsociable abode ; but still Evelina was its inmate, and it was in her that he sought for compensation. Mr. Seton left them to do exactly as they pleased, and they passed the whole of every day in each other's company. They walked, rode, sat and sang together. The day was not long enough for their communion.

Amidst, however, the general plainness, not to say poverty of Knipersley Castle, there was one apartment which Evelina with exquisite skill and taste, and admirable economy of her trivial means, had dedicated to herself : it was her own boudoir ; this room was a small octagon, and was situated in one of the turrets which overhung a deep

ravine, at a point where the river in its rugged course fell over the point of a rock into a natural basin below. Its walls were pannelled in small compartments and the frieze was carved alternately with her initials, and the shield of her arms emblazoned in their proper colours : the wainscoat was painted in red, green and gold ; on each side was a mirror, and all around were affixed gilt brackets, variously surmounted with rare bits of European and Oriental porcelain, and miniatures in rich frames of velvet, enamel and gold.

At one end was a conservatory : small, but full of choice and odoriferous plants, cultivated with her own hands ; and at the other an aviary, with canaries, parrots,

bullfinches and thrushes, whose varied notes kept up an agreeable, though inharmonious concert. The furniture, in colour apple green, was of the simplest yet most tasteful kind; there was no profusion, yet no meanness; no ostentation, yet no poverty; no superfluity, yet nothing deficient; whilst a piano and a harp, the newest publications in books and prints, drawings and various styles of work, evinced the cultivation of her mind and the innocence and purity of her amusements.

In this delicious boudoir ^{Mr.} Sir Philip passed the seductive hours, until he forgot what was due to others and to himself; but what principally excited his astonishment

and puzzled his judgment, was the perfect blindness which seemed to obscure the discernment of Mr. Seton. To the casual observers, who were occasionally guests at his table, the attentions of Sir Philip to Mrs. Seton were visible enough, and as is usual in such cases, had become the subject of conversation and censure to all the gossips in the neighbourhood. There was one amongst them to whom some parts of Sir Philip's previous history and character were known: and he did not fail to publish his observations of the past and his predictions of the future. Reports were thus gradually spread of the intimacy which subsisted between them; and Sir Philip himself, in spite of his utmost caution, was

so aware of the marked nature of their intercourse, that he could scarcely convince himself that it was unknown to Mr. Seton.

This very suspicion operated powerfully on his mind: he communicated it to Evelina, and found that she too entertained it. A thousand dark surmises presented themselves to their imagination. That Mr. Seton should not have a glimpse of what any one else saw so plainly, was incredible; that he should be indifferent to it, equally so. What then could this conduct imply? was he desirous of encouraging their advances, to avail himself of their indiscretion?

This last thought communicated itself imperceptibly and irresistibly to the active

imagination of Sir Philip Gasteneys, and made him resolve the more sedulously to defeat any such project if it existed. He had discovered that serious discontent and uncomfortableness had for some time existed between Mr. and Mrs. Seton. Their tempers did not assimilate, nor were their taste and pursuits conformable to each other: the feeling under which Evelina had now been struggling for some time, had enlarged the cause of dissatisfaction, and widened the breach between them.

In the course of these dissensions, Mr. Seton would frequently develop his feelings to Sir Philip and ask his advice; a course which the judgment of the latter condemned, and the honesty of his heart re-

jected. He could not reconcile it to his conscience to deceive or betray a person who voluntarily and unsuspectingly confided in him and looked to him for help, yet he could not relinquish the dearest object of existence. He did every thing in his power to heal their dissensions, and in great measure succeeded. He loved Evelina, but he did not desire to destroy the domestic peace of Mr. Seton.

And thus things for some time continued, whilst still the scruples of Evelina were unvanquished, though her heart, with its deepest affection, was irrevocably transferred to Sir Philip Gasteneys.

It was under these circumstances that

he met with an accident which confined him for many weeks to his apartment, and at one time threatened serious consequences. During this period of anxiety and distress, the deep and entire affection of Eveline was developed to him. She watched by his bedside, she administered to his wants, she cheered his drooping spirit, and calmed his agitated soul. Her very existence seemed to hang upon his fate.

There is nothing from which the heart imbibes such tender recollections, or by which it is impressed with so much gratitude as the attentions shewn on a dying bed. They seem to link one inseparably with the giver of them ; to invest one with a right to incorporate one's most

secret thoughts with theirs, to make it a duty to love and cherish them. When Sir Philip Gasteneys arose from his melancholy couch, he looked upon Evelina as his deliverer,—she regarded him as her God.

The struggle was over : they were blind to the danger of their situation, and they fell into the commission of evil. They sinned — knowingly, wilfully, irresistibly ; and if the severest punishment that heaven or earth could have affixed to their crime had been before their eyes, it is feared, alas ! so infatuated were they, that they would nevertheless have sinned.

But the morrow was to come. It was after a night of guilty enjoyment

that they were to meet, on his return home, the one, an injured husband, the other an abused friend. They knew that no trace of their transgression was discernible ; they were safe from detection, secure from reproach. But they had lost their innocence, and tranquillity refused to sit upon their brow ! The day passed wretchedly, they wandered on each other's arm in the most secluded places, and lingered in the most solitary spots. The bright sun of a July evening was retiring from the world, and they found themselves in the churchyard which I have described. The full tide of remorse and love came over them : they entered the house of God, they approached his altar, they asked forgiveness upon their knees, and swore in

the same breath a vow of endless and immutable affection.

It was shortly after this, that Sir Philip was obliged to return home. He felt that any more protracted stay would compromise Mrs. Seton's honour. He was not free from surmises that it had not already been endangered. It was difficult to tear himself from a scene endeared by such recollections. The ivy is not separated from the tree, nor the periwinkle from the rock with more reluctant violence than Sir Philip from Evelina : she fixed her large blue eyes upon him with a gaze of deep and unutterable despair ; he clasped her in his arms, pressed her to his desolate bosom, overpowered her with caresses, and

flooded her with tears. A thousand times did he meditate on removing her for ever from her now wretched home, and making her his wife, and a thousand times did he reject the project when he compared with his own happiness the ruin it would bring on her husband, her children, and herself.

They parted ; but their hearts could not be rent asunder. From that hour, for many, many months, Sir Philip and Evelina knew no peace.

He went back in lonely misery to his mother, but he could not now bear the place in which any object reminded him of Evelina. He returned to Oxford. The gaiety and dissipation of his College life

had no longer any charm for him. All and every thing were flown. His mind had lost its energies, his body its appetite, his soul its repose.

Before his departure he had arranged the means of corresponding secretly with Evelina. It was the only pleasure left him. It was one of these communications from her, which one morning conveyed to him a discovery which he had long dreaded : the jealousy of Mr. Seton had at length been excited by the insinuations of some, and the friendly warnings of others. He had been told of the intimacy which was supposed to exist between his wife and Sir Philip Gasteneys ; and, with a sort of doubtful feeling, which on the one hand

was not strong enough to convince himself, nor on the other to resist the importunities of his advisers, he determined on communicating the nature of his sentiments, and the disagreeableness of his situation to Sir Philip, and on terminating by these means, in an amicable manner their former intercourse.

He had imparted this intention to Mrs. Seton, and it was of this that she now apprized Sir Philip. Accordingly the next morning post brought him the following letter :

“ Dear Sir Philip,

“ The world, it appears, has thought fit to raise injurious, and perhaps unjustifiable

reports of the nature of your feelings and conduct towards Mrs. Seton, since your departure hence.

“ I have no means of judging accurately of the truth or falsehood of these representations, and I am unwilling to suspect, what I should be sorry to be convinced of.

“ But I cannot act with apparent indifference towards my best interests, or with complete negligence to the advice and entreaties of my best friends ; and I, therefore, have come to this resolution, as the best which, under all circumstances, I can adopt, of communicating to you my desire, that from this time, in order to

prevent the further progress of these rumours, our acquaintance and intercourse may cease.

“ I am, yours truly,

“ HENRY SETON.”

Knipersley Castle.

To Sir Philip Gasteneys, Bart.

On the receipt of this letter, Sir Philip was agitated by the most conflicting emotions. A stop was immediately to be put to his intercourse with Evelina; her honour to be compromised, his own character to be attacked, Mr. Seton's mind to be disturbed. He could not submit to his injunctions without tacitly acknowledging the justice and necessity of them. He saw no

good, and much ill arising from such a course.

But how was it to be avoided ? He could not deny the truth of Mr. Seton's suspicions without expressing his indignation at, and demanding satisfaction for them : and this mode of proceeding, though it seemed on all accounts, the best calculated to answer the ends he had in view, viz : of gratifying himself and Evelina; and continuing his intimacy with her, was liable to this objection, the chance of his being the destroyer of Mr. Seton, as well as the seducer of his wife. It was a dreadful alternative to expose himself to the possibility of adding murder to adultery, and robbing children of a father, as well as a husband of his wife.

Sir Philip was lost between his desire to remedy what he had already done, and his dread of doing something worse. He hesitated between a choice of evils, such as seldom present themselves for decision; but he was of a bold and adventurous disposition, firm of purpose, fearless of execution. As yet, there was hope, there was a remedy; and, desperate as they might seem, he was bound, in justice to Evelina, to avail himself of them, if he could.

He consulted only his own heart; to no human being had he ever breathed a syllable of his long and fatal, and engrossing passion. The secret of his heart had been known only to Evelina; and, now in the crisis of his misery and misfortune, he

would not disclose her shame and the tale of her sorrow, even to his bosom friend.

He wrote the following answer to Mr. Seton's letter :

Sir,

“ I have had the honour to receive a communication from you, which it has been as painful to me to read, as it must have been to you to write.

“ Sir, you have ventured, without regard to Mrs. Seton's feelings, to your own, or to mine, to accuse me of sentiments and conduct towards her, which I ought never to have entertained ; these accusations and charges you found only upon surmises and

reports, the truth of which you have taken no pains to investigate, and the authors of which you do not condescend to name : whilst, without reference to your own observation, which, during the many months that I had the pleasure of passing under your roof, had no cause to suspect me ; and admitting that you ‘ have no means of judging accurately of the truth or falsehood of them,’ you affix to them the stamp of your authority and recognition, by refusing to hold communion with me any more.

“ Sir, if you have been so far led astray from your sense of duty to Mrs. Seton and delicacy to yourself, as thus to proclaim her to the world, as a woman whose reputa-

tion is blighted and whose virtue has been assailed, I own, with great truth and candour, that I have too much sincere regard for her, too lively a recollection of her great kindness to me, too much gratitude to her yet unpaid, and too much respect also for my own character, thus to surrender so easily to unjust condemnation.

“ I therefore feel it to be a duty which I cannot dispense with, nor discharge without regret, to require at your hands, either the names of the calumniators, who bring these charges against me, and have offered you the advice on which you have acted, or a full and explicit recantation of, and apology for them,

or satisfaction for the injury thus offered me.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ PHILIP GASTENEYS.”

To Henry Seton, Esq.

Sir Philip waited with restless anxiety for a reply to this letter ; and great was his satisfaction, on receiving one far different from what he had expected. Mr. Seton, doubtful himself upon a point, on which he was reluctant to be convinced, struck, perhaps, with the apparent force of Sir Philip's arguments, and unwilling, by any act of his own, to publish the ignominy

of his family, wrote to Sir Philip, to assure him of his regret at having been momentarily induced to countenance reports, which he now utterly discredited, and expressing his hopes, that they should remain on the same friendly and confidential footing on which they had previously stood.

The danger was past; guilt and audacity had triumphed; but it had been too imminent to be incurred again. Sir Philip could not any further risk the peace and happiness of a family which he had already too deeply injured.

He resolved to go abroad; it was the only course which prudence pointed out to him. It was a great effort to separate

himself from Evelina ; but of great efforts, when necessary, he was capable.

He was possessed, in consequence of a long minority, of a very large sum, which was disposable by will, although he had not attained the age of twenty-one ; he was now in fact, only nineteen. This property he bequeathed before he left England, in case of his death, to Evelina ; it was the only proof he could give her of his undying affection.


He left Oxford, and proceeded to London, from thence he set sail to Calais : it was to the classic soil of Italy that he determined to repair ; it had been the favourite dream of his youngest hours, it was

adapted to his studies, his pleasures and his tastes.

Who can find adventures on the beaten road over which Hannibal was the first to cross? It would be an idle attempt to look for wonders oneself, or to describe to others what they all have seen. Sir Philip, indeed, was disposed to view every thing through a gloomy medium; and the season of the year; for it was the depth of winter, in those rugged regions where she has fixed her tyrannic reign, was ill calculated to cheer his vision. He went, like any other traveller, over the uninteresting and unvaried plain of *la belle France*, abiding at the best hotels, and adding, like his precursors, his sometimes reluctant testimony to the comfort and accommodations of

the house and the attentions of the host ; comforts and attentions they might well be termed, if compared with what he met with in the uncivilized and miserable haunts, which afterwards occurred on his passage.

On arriving at that mighty barrier which is the natural bulwark of Italy, the snow was found to have rendered the road impassable ; but Sir Philip could not brook delay, and deaf to remonstrance, and insensible to fear, he set off from Lanslebourg. Twelve melancholy hours passed away, the long unbroken ascent was perseveringly continued, many perils were encountered ; some accidents occurred, when, by the united help of horses, oxen and men, Sir Philip arrived at the lonely inn on the high and desolate plain of Mount Cenis.



With the aid of his servant he got, or rather was taken out of his carriage ; for the cold had benumbed his limbs, and the glare of the eternal snow which covers the face of this mountain, had rendered him half blind and giddy.

Words might be sought in vain to describe the inconceivable wretchedness of this sole refuge of the weary traveller in one of the most arbitrary regions of nature. Sir Philip was conducted up a steep and snow-clad stair-case into a large and gloomy room, where a crowd of benighted and assassin-like strangers, were contending with each other for proximity to the solitary stove, which diffused a feeble warmth through its immense circumference. Sir

Philip did not long remain here to dispute the empire of barbarity and selfishness, but desired to be shewn into a room for the night. He was accordingly led through a long, dark, narrow, uneven and slippery passage into a small bed-chamber. The floor was uncarpeted, except with grease, the windows uncurtained, whilst a solitary table and two chairs were placed against the wall. The walls themselves were painted in a rude and gaudy manner; a remnant which the Italians still preserve of the customs of their great progenitors. The door with a reluctant latch and superannuated hinges gave no token of its existence, but by its ceaseless and annoying creak, and was as useless in excluding the wind, as it was efficacious in disturbing

the tranquillity of the chamber to which it belonged. In another corner of this miserable den, was placed the bed : if a bundle of straw and a coverlid of rags, laid upon two transverse boards without pillow, bolster or hangings, could justly be so termed.

To this hole, the most miserable he had ever entered, Sir Philip was consigned for the night. By the light of a solitary tallow candle, which gave more indication of its intended office by its smell than by its flame, he was left to ruminate on his situation. The cook who first dressed his dinner had now strewed his couch, and left him with a "*felicissima notte*," to the fleas and to his fate.

. What a comparison between his present situation and the one he had not long since left ! Could Evelina fail to occupy his distracted mind ? could sleep close his eyelids when he thought of her and of what he had lost ?

He rose at day-break and proceeded on his journey, but nothing now could interest him. The gaiety of cities, the brilliancy of courts, the charms of music, of poetry, painting, architecture and sculpture, were all lost on him. The splendid regularity of Turin, the smiling magnificence of Florence, the voluptuous freedom of the Sardinians, the sprightly converse of the Tuscans, failed to attract him. He hurried on to a scene more accordant with

his own gloomy and dilapidated feelings, where he might indulge in meditation, and mourn in secret : it was to Rome that he repaired. He longed to commune with her monuments and dwell amid her ruins.

But the pest of English society, which he was anxious to avoid, still followed him even here. The world had now grown antiquarian ; and every body thought it necessary to visit the grave of the Cæsars and the cradle of the Popes. It was not enough, as formerly, that people should be content with reading the travels of others, they must needs travel and write travels themselves, and infect with their barbarous and unlettered presence, the asylum of antiquity and the birth-place of the arts.

Rome was at this time crowded with foreigners of all descriptions, but particularly by English. Our countrymen, established there from principles of economy which they could not practice at home, found themselves rich enough with the wreck of their fortunes to eclipse in splendour and magnificence the impoverished nobles of the Italian courts. They insolently took possession of the finest palaces of the grandees, and vied with each other in the frequency and sumptuousness of entertainments held in the hired saloons of the uninvited owner. Petty jealousies, the degrading rivalries and animosities which influence little minds, destroyed at the same time the harmony which might have pervaded their society and divided it into party ca-

bals and opposition coteries. The eccentric and defamed Countess who had lost her caste in society at home, was here the self-erected arbitress of propriety and ton. The learned wife of an expectant heir made up for less ample display by the selection of more intellectual guests, and tried to hold that rank as a blue-stocking, which she anticipated as a Marchioness. In her less gorgeous apartments, the flashes of wit were meant to supply those of wax candles, and the feast of reason was served up in lieu of more substantial fare to guests whose appetites were sharper than their intellects. In this circle every body was expected to bring amusement for others, not to find it provided for themselves, and a solo on the

harp or a duet by the lady and her governess on the piano, with a stupid dissertation on a broken lamp, or a piece of lava, was the attraction for which each novice guest had to do penance by climbing to the summit of the Pincio.

There were others too of our high-born country-folks, who sought to amuse men with the pastimes of children, and with thirteen of their offspring, brought to Rome for education, got up a dance on the carpet, or a concert *en famille*. It was delightful to be linked almost double with a little girl no higher than your knee, or sit crying "bravo" and "encore" to the chirping of a nest of young christians less harmo-

nious than screech-owls ; and nothing could be more interesting than this sacrifice of mature age to youthful enjoyment.

Nor was it much better at the houses of the foreign ministers. There was so little good *matériel* for filling the enormous salons of the ancient palaces which they occupied, that it was absolutely necessary to have recourse to the high-ways and ditches in search of guests. The line once broken, the rout became a rabble, and it was an even chance at one of these grand *soirées*, where the aristocratic representative of the *grand monarque* of the *grande nation*, received without distinction the introductions of a banker's clerk, that the skirt of your coat was torn off by the very tailor who cut it

out. With the English, the confusion of rank and society was still worse than with the strangers of any other nation: for having no minister at the court of Rome, they were necessarily at the mercy of foreigners totally unacquainted with their birth and station; and many is the shopman west of Temple-Bar who has availed himself of this ignorance to make his bow to a princess and shake hands with a cardinal.

There were *tableaux* too, a species of entertainment, the actors in which should have pretty faces and no brains. *Ecarté* was played upon credit for a scudo a game, and long whist was occasionally attempted.

Sir Philip Gasteneys soon discovered the

nature of the society, and as soon became disgusted with it. There were balls, and parties, and concerts somewhere or other every night, and he had no sooner arrived than all these different classes were anxious to enrol him in their circle; but there was no reciprocity of feeling between him and them. He despised the arrogance of some, and loathed the ignorance of others.

His mornings, however, were passed to his heart's content in the Forum, the Basilicæ or the Coliseum. He wandered in the baths of Caracalla, or amid the ruins of the Palatine, and lingered with becoming emotions on the various scenes consecrated by republican virtue, or degraded by imperial vice.

Of all places in the world, Rome is the most fit to teach wisdom, to inspire morality. It abounds with so many existing associations of good and evil, it furnishes so many striking instances of patriotism and treason, of heroism and cowardice, of prosperity and misfortune, it teems with so many contradictory examples of honour and bad faith, of equity and injustice, of cruelty and mercy, of chastity and corruption, that the most thoughtless is compelled to reflect, and the most negligent to consider. It is impossible to live in it, and be indifferent to its lessons.

The comparison of the many awful changes it has undergone, the contrast between its present and its past condition,

the melancholy humiliation to which its temporal power is reduced, and the vain importance with which its spiritual rulers still endeavour to invest it in the eyes of a more enlightened and less superstitious world, afford a constant and unwearying subject of reflection and discourse.

Sir Philip's great delight was in the study of that long and dismal period, which extinguished the genius of the ancient, and gave birth to that of the modern world. He loved to observe the gradual decay, the total annihilation, the progressive resuscitation of the faculties of man, and to riot in the undisturbed contemplation of all the wonders which the past periods of his greatness had produced. He studied the vast and admirable

proportions, the chaste and elegant design, the exquisitely rich, yet not overloaded ornaments of the Greek and Roman architects, and sighed with indignation and pity at the barbarous hands, which, with rude materials and uncultured taste, had insolently essayed to alter or restore their crumbling members : and again he turned with pride and satisfaction from the pieced architrave and mangled columns of St. Lorenzo, where cornices are sawed into mutules, and capitals degraded into bases, to the gigantic Cupola of St. Peter's, and the modest and unassuming Tempietto of Bramante.

To the student of architecture, to him who loves to trace its march from the days of its former perfection, through successive

stages to the present hour, or to him whose curiosity is interested in the early progress of christianity and its disciples, the Basilicæ offer the most interesting spectacle of any of the monuments of ancient Rome. In their still brilliant but coarse mosaics, their marble ambones, their spiral and twisted columns, and their frescoes from the brush of Masaccio or Giotto, the mind is led back to the remote and obscure periods when the absurd superstitions of paganism, were abandoned for the scarcely less unintelligible mysteries of the new Doctrine, when a fresh set of performers played almost similar ceremonies upon the same stage. From these rude efforts of simple and incipient zeal, when, as yet the thought of serving their Redeemer was not superseded in the

mind of the primitive christians, by the impious ambition of exalting their church and its worldly interests, under the pretence of piety, it was instructive to mark, as you might well do at Rome, the gradual advances made in the temporal power and influence of the Clergy and the Pope, from the days of Constantine to those of Charlemagne and the Countess Matilda, the grasping Borgia and the warlike Julius, and observe their domineering authority over the consciences and purses of their universal flock by the increasing splendour and magnificence of their churches, where the marbles of Africa and Asia, relics of imperial grandeur, where gilding and sculpture, painting and precious stones, dazzle the eye and bewilder the imagination.

It certainly is a striking peculiarity, and one indicative of the great influence which the immortal works of the ancient architects exercised over the minds and tastes of their degenerate descendants in the capital, that no example, beyond an obscure window or an insignificant arch, should be found within the walls or precincts of the once mistress of the world. That style of architecture, absurdly enough denominated gothic, though introduced into Europe long after the Goths had ceased to make their irruptions, and apparently derived by progressive stages from the Roman, both in its leading features and its ornaments, never ventured to intrude its unhallowed forms into the Queen of Cities, though it overran every other part of Italy and the world. The

latest monuments which we have of works purely Roman in the fifth and sixth centuries, and the earliest which exist from the hands of barbarians, but not of Goths, and particularly those in the South of France, prove satisfactorily enough, one would imagine, that the styles popularly denominated, Saxon, Norman and Gothic, all had one common origin in the corruption, and rude and unskilful imitation of the master-pieces of antiquity : the clumsy and undigested combination of men equally devoid of science and of taste ; too ignorant even to copy well, much less capable of inventing. The ornaments reversed, the mouldings misapplied, the capitals of the columns, the intersection of the arch, lead one irresistibly to this conclusion ; until in process of time,

as the sciences and arts became more cultivated, and the more than Philistine darkness of the middle ages began to be dispelled, (in the 12th and 13th centuries), the great power which the Papacy then began to exercise over every kingdom and state in Europe, and the predominating influence of religion gave an impulse and energy to ecclesiastical architecture, which called forth the exertions of the ablest and most wealthy Princes and subjects, and raised it, in the course of four centuries, to a degree of magnificence, variety and beauty, which, preserving the same general character, acquired in some measure peculiar distinction in the four countries, where it was principally cultivated, viz. Italy, Germany, England and France.

It was the daily custom of Sir Philip to visit some one of the galleries or studios. In the Vatican, the Borghese, and the Capitol was his element: he devoted many hours to reading the classics, historians and poets, and made his own reflections in writing on the occurrences of the day; a practice which he never abandoned. By these means, he soon became intimately acquainted with the subjects which thus charmed and occupied his attention: Tiraboschi, Muratori, Sismondi, became familiar to him; Winkelmann, Agincourt, Lanzi and Cicognara were his bosom friends.

Nor with these deeper occupations of the mind, did he forget the lighter accomplish-

ments: music and singing, and the mellifluous language which he had never yet learnt, filled up his intervals of study, and prepared him for the enjoyment of the Opera and Drama.

But with these various and commendable pursuits, the want of society, of something which he might love, of a being in whom he might feel some interest, gradually preyed upon his resolution and spirits. He felt that a part of his nature, that part which it was his peculiar quality to exercise and cultivate, was lying dormant; the sensibilities of his soul were unexcited.

He had not forgotten Evelina! she was ever present to his solitary thoughts! It

was the very recollection of the happiness he had enjoyed, the comparison between his actual loneliness and his past connection with her ; the memory of her fondness, the absence of her sweet and delicate attentions, that made him feel like an abandoned and neglected being. He wandered along the melancholy streets of the Eternal City, and felt how transitory his bliss had been. His eyes rested continually on objects of gratification to the mind, but sought in vain, for any thing to interest the heart.

It was in one of these fits of extreme depression, having momentarily resolved on returning to England that he found himself in St. Peter's. Before an altar in one of the chapels knelt a female in the act of

prayer. She was in deep mourning, and her eyes were raised towards heaven. Her face was the living image of the Magdalen of Carlo Dolce. Never had Sir Philip seen a more perfect combination of dignity, tenderness and grief.

He resolved to ascertain who she was, to learn her history, if possible to know her. He watched without daring to address her till she arose, and the curtain fell upon her graceful and majestic figure. One might have imagined that a statue of Michael Angelo had been imbued with motion, and descended from its pedestal to walk in conscious superiority amongst the living daughters of men.

Sir Philip was not long in discovering

her name and family. He had observed, at a distance, the house which she entered : a magnificent palace encumbered with all the ornaments and enrichments which distinguish and disgrace the Italian architecture of the seventeenth century. Columns crowded together, yet supporting nothing ; orders repeated, mingled and misplaced ; fleur de lis instead of acanthus leaves in the capital, and bees instead of roses in the Abacus ;* from Borromini to Bernini, one disgusting mass of splendid freaks and senseless affectations.

The eye of taste is shocked at the monstrous incongruities and absurdities, the

* This puerility is to be observed in many of the palaces of the Barberini family, whose armorial bearings were bees.

difficult and unintelligible deviations from simplicity and order, which every where present themselves in the edifices of modern Rome. The boasted architects of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, instead of having profited from the fine examples of ancient art, by which they were surrounded, seem to have vied with each other in raising contrasts to the ruined beauties which they pretended to admire, but did not attempt to imitate ; and as though determined to avoid the error of their predecessors in the middle ages, of borrowing and misapplying and ill-arranging the materials of the ancients, appear to have tortured their ingenuity to invent a style, certainly more original, but scarcely less deformed.

Yet they have been defended, as the master-pieces of the Roman artists have been decried; and the same ignorance which made Montaigne insensible to the modest beauties of the one, caused Donato to overrate the meretricious splendour of the other.

Sir Philip found that this lady was of noble birth; a conjecture which might easily be made in a country where nobles are more numerous than plebeians, and that she had lost her mother some few months ago. She was the only daughter of Count Barberini and had one brother.

His next object was to be introduced to

her, and gain access to the family, but this was not easily accomplished. The Italian nobility, and particularly the Roman, depressed by their poverty and altered condition, are shy of having any intercourse with foreigners, to whom they consider themselves, perhaps, in every thing but wealth, superior; and they consequently go little into society. He discovered, however, that she was intimate, and in some measure connected with an English lady whom he knew, and that she frequently went to her house. At one of these visits Sir Philip contrived to introduce himself and subsequently improved and increased the opportunities of seeing her.

He was in love; but he was awed by the

apparent inaccessibility of the object. He regarded her as the pious worshipper regards the image of the Virgin over the altar, which might be admired—adored—but could not be approached too nearly.

Her whole deportment was that of a being different from, and immeasurably superior to the generality of women. Her conversation was full of feeling, taste and information, and there was a romantic action about every thing she thought, and said, and did, that kept inferior minds from attempting, almost from wishing to communicate with her. She had no pride, but that of a noble and independent mind; no affectation of the little graces and accomplishments of her sex; no disguise

of real feelings ; no assumption of false ones.

But Paulina was a thorough Italian. Full of passion, infirm of principle, careless to control, or unable to subdue any natural emotion which had once arisen in her ; she was one who judged not by the precepts of education, or the dictates of schoolmen, of what was right or wrong, but by the impulses of nature and the inclinations of her heart, and preserved, under the demeanor which the good order of society and the manners of her high station required, the arbitrary right to dispose as she pleased of her affections and herself.

Nor for a long time did Sir Philip Gaste-

neys, with all his knowledge of the various shapes which female sensibility assumes, entertain the most remote idea of Paulina's real character. From the first hour of his acquaintance with her, he had imbibed so forcible an opinion of her modesty and virtue, that the base idea of making any inroad on them, never once occurred to him. He endeavoured, indeed, to make himself as agreeable to her as he could; first, because he admired her, a sensation which he could not help, and secondly, because he respected as it appeared to him, her amiable and ingenuous disposition. He delighted too, in the charms and accomplishments of her mind, in the richness and vivacity of her imagination, added to which, there was a degree of gloom and melancholy occasion-

ally over-spreading her fine and expressive countenance, and pervading her discourse, which harmonized greatly with the present state of his own feelings.

And it was this very opinion, which probably made him more cautious and reserved in his behaviour, at the same time that it increased his passion for her. Reluctant to, or rather resolved not to think of any honourable engagement with a foreigner, Sir Philip endeavoured to hide from her, by an indifference which he really did not feel, the existence of sentiments, the discovery of which, he conceived, gratifying as it might be to Paulina's vanity, could be productive of no advantage to him; still however, some secret signs, indications of

feelings better understood than described, occasionally escaped him. His conversation, his attentions, his presence became daily more agreeable to her ; accident, the result of desire always ingenious and abundant in its resources, threw them more frequently together. In these interviews, there were moments when the languishing expression of her fine dark eye fell beneath his glance, and its orb became suffused with tears : there were mysterious allusions and obscure hints in her words, which he longed to understand, yet did not dare to interpret. Sir Philip began to think that he had made an impression on her, but he did not imagine that she would listen to his proposals. The breath of slander had never passed near her, the thoughtless and

presumptuous boy had never joked, the hardened libertine never dared to trifle with her name.

Sir Philip felt himself embarrassed, and the problem was a difficult one to solve. It was evident that he touched some chord which vibrated through Paulina's frame; but what it was, he himself could not guess. There were none of the ordinary and vulgar symptoms of admiration and affection, none of the common preludes of a love-sick girl. The speculation was a dangerous one, but the temptation was great; he shuddered at the idea of wounding Paulina's delicacy, and forfeiting her esteem by acting upon a miscalculation of her principles and feelings, yet he could not forgive himself for

losing so great a prize, from falsely overrating them.

A man less acquainted with human nature, and more diffident of his own power, would have been at a loss how to act in such an emergency; Sir Philip knew very well, that if Paulina were in love with him and intended to indulge that sentiment, restraint on his part would produce activity on hers; and that if she were not, no efforts, of which he was capable, would shake the stability of that virtue for which she had so much credit.

“ The man’s a fool, who tries by force or skill

To check the torrent of a woman’s will :

For if she will, she will, you may depend on’t;

And if she won’t, she won’t, and there’s an end on’t.”

He therefore determined, more for her sake than for his own, to make her the arbiter of her own fate ; and waited, with apparent indifference, the course which she would take, of surrender or retreat.

And in this he judged and acted wisely ; any premature disclosure on his part, of a passion, which might have been hopeless, would only have exposed Paulina to observation and perhaps to slander.

But his doubts were of short duration ; Paulina yielded to an impulse which had long agitated her and which she had taken little pains to oppose. The most ordinary mode of communication between lovers gradually inclining to develop their secret

hopes and wishes, is by means of poetry. Through its medium, they speak intelligibly but indirectly, and whilst seeming to read and write of others, think only of themselves. Of this mode, Paulina, who was herself a poet of no contemptible calibre, did not disdain to avail herself. In the passages which she oft times repeated in conversation to Sir Philip, (and she knew all the best authors of her country well), he did not fail to discover allusions, which plainly indicated that his suspicions were correct, and to establish, by his replies, a sort of mystical language, obscure and incomprehensible to all the world besides, but expressive and harmonious to themselves.

There lived in Rome a celebrated music-

master, by name Spallini. This man was paralytic and had lost the use of his lower extremities, but his reputation was great; and fashion, if not science, had established the necessity of every one's receiving instruction from him, who was ambitious of playing, or of being supposed to play well. The consequence was, that all the young ladies of Rome went to him, since he could not go to them. Nature, in spite of the Pope and Conclave, took the same course at Rome, as it was wont to do at Paris, and as it will always do in similar circumstances all over the world. Spallini was to the one, as Mademoiselle le Normand to the other : the former taught the piano, the latter told fortunes, and both were proficientes and helpmates in intrigue.

Sir Philip, among the numerous talents with which nature had endowed him, possessed some taste for music. At the house of this professor, he easily established a free intercourse, and if he made no great advances under his master, he made ample amends with his mistress, for in a short time, such was Paulina.

Of all the incidents which ever occurred to him, and his life was fruitful in them, this was the most extraordinary; that a being, who seemed to tower above the ordinary weakness of mankind, and to defy even the secret formation of an illicit wish should have yielded to an assault which was scarcely threatened, or rather should have offered to capitulate, because she was

afraid of not being attacked, seemed almost incomprehensible. Never had he found any one so able in arrangement, so artful in management, so fearless in execution, so fertile in design.

But the great charm of this conquest was, the infantine simplicity and artlessness of its victim. Paulina listened only to the suggestions of her heart ; it was nature acting in its purest and most unsophisticated state. She felt only that she loved, and that her love must be indulged. For many months, Sir Philip lived with her as a mother with her first-born child : full of fondness, anxiety, hope, fear and joy. He was lost in the vast capacity of his happiness, like a stranger in the centre

of the Colosseum, who knows, yet scarcely can comprehend the mighty circumference by which he is surrounded.

How glorious was the contemplation of possessing such a being—how intoxicating the thought of passing hours and days in a secret paradise, amid the very haunts of men, which no one could guess and every one would envy !

But this, as well as every other gratification with Sir Philip, wore out after a time ; novelty had always been to him one of the chief sources of happiness. His genius was so universal and his comprehension so quick, that he generally made himself master of any subject he liked to

undertake, (and he never attempted any which was not agreeable to him,) in the same time that others took to set about studying it. This was the great secret of his success in every thing ; whatever he did, he did from his very soul. His mind was like a great city, wherein there is one vast central channel of communication, along which are placed the principal objects, which serve as guides and land-marks to the subordinate streets and places diverging from it. He had been so well grounded in the elements of those studies which were most congenial to his nature, that he had little difficulty in arriving at their most minute details.

He now began to grow weary of the

wonders and attractions of Rome. Every thing will satiate if partaken of too long. He had enjoyed a delicious banquet of intellectual pleasures for many months, and having learnt to appreciate real beauties himself, he was sick of hearing others pretend to admire and criticise objects, the merits of which they neither felt nor understood.

There is nothing so tantalizing to a man of science as to be obliged to listen to the remarks and opinions of persons immeasurably inferior to him—to remain silent lest his observations should be misconstrued, and to nod assent lest his silence should be mistaken for ignorance. At Rome, every body, from the Cardinal to the school-boy,

and from the matron to the miss, thinks himself or herself authorized to discuss the wonders and beauties of that immortal City, and in some shape or other, to display enthusiasm and learning. There is no end to the profanation which these Tyros commit against the Holy City, nor any shelter from the persecution with which they visit, without remorse, strangers, acquaintance and friends.

For the most part, indeed, he followed his way unobserved, and treated the observations of others with contempt. He would not listen to the old beldame who pointed out the beauties of the Colosseum, from its mosaic likeness upon her wrinkled neck, and he turned with disgust from the

immodest coquette, who criticised the shape of the Apollo's leg, for the sake of shewing her own up to the garter.

Nor was he much better pleased with the elements of which society was composed amongst men : a narrowness of mind and restraint of action seemed to pervade all the descendants of the masters of the world. The great efforts of the rulers of modern Rome were apparently directed to the exclusion of knowledge, and the concealment, not the extirpation of vice. Outside every thing was fair ; inside, every thing rotten, and the spurious morality which excluded women from the Crypt of St. Peters, or the Chapel which preserves the flagellation column in Santa Prassede, introduced itself

from the convent to the drawing room, and converted that agreeable and natural intercourse, which adorns the salons of London and Paris, into the stiff and formal etiquette of an Italian *soirée*.

This was the necessary result of the Roman Catholic system. Its natural and inevitable tendency is to make hypocrites, not saints of its professors. It is not in human nature that any set of principles should make one body of mankind less corrupt or more virtuous than another, but it may make it more artful. In England and France there is not more debauchery among the men, nor more immorality among the women than in Italy, but there is infinitely more appearance of them in both. In the

first, we violate openly the forms which regulate society, and bear our punishment along with our pleasure. In the latter, less respect perhaps is paid to real virtue, but much more to outward form.

This is undoubtedly true ; yet nothing can be more subversive of morality, or more contrary to the true spirit of the christian religion. If any one were to judge of the society of Rome from what he simply saw in a drawing room, he would suppose that if the men were all Josephs, there was at any rate no Potiphars amongst the women. Yet the exact reverse of this is the fact : celibacy amongst the priests is a bye word ; fidelity amongst wives a reproach ; concealment with both a virtue. The Spartans

never taught their youth with more dexterity to steal, than the Pope instructs his disciples to sin.

It is in Rome only that the true spirit of the Roman Catholic doctrines and Priesthood can be adequately observed and comprehended ; it is there only that it displays itself at once in its most attractive beauties, and revolting deformities ; that we sneer at the gross and ill-executed mummery, which deludes the minds of the illiterate and poor, yet feel ourselves waver at the imposing solemnities, which accompany the sacred and venerable presence of the mitred representative of St. Peter.

Undoubtedly the Church of Rome has

consulted the nature of man more profoundly than any other ; undoubtedly she has succeeded in establishing a form of worship which affects the senses so much, that it almost destroys the reason ; which elevates the soul, which inspires devotion, which fills one with an idea of the greatness and majesty of heaven. The temples of the Roman Catholics, rich in marbles, mosaic and gold, full of the finest productions of the chisel and the pencil, glowing with frankincense, and resounding with the rich tones of the organ, and the fine voices of the choristers, seem as though they were raised for the worship of God, by persons anxious to display their utmost zeal in adoring him. All their institutions tend to captivate the imagination, to seduce the

heart, to bewilder the judgment, to enervate the reason.

There is too, another circumstance independent of their outward ceremonies, which acts as an eternal principle in the preservation of their church, and exercises a great influence, till it be properly understood, upon the mind of others: it is the unwearying zeal which they evince in making converts to their creed. It is a point of belief with a Roman Catholic, that by saving (as he supposes) the soul of a heretic, he thereby saves his own. Thus, that which assumes the appearance of disinterested charity and impartial zeal, is, in fact, nothing but the result of the most bigoted and selfish feeling. The Roman

Catholic seeks to convert, not upon the modern principle which gratuitously sends the bible to the Deserts of Africa and the wilds of regions unexplored, but with the sole and simple view of ensuring his own salvation and increasing his temporal influence. It is this which animates every individual member of the Romish hierarchy from the Irish priest to the mitred abbot : for in spite of all that modern politicians may assert, the spirit of Gregory the Seventh still lurks in the subterraneous apartments of the Vatican, and Boniface the Eighth skulks behind the arras which hangs the chamber of the courteous Leo.*

* This was written before the death of the late Pope, who was remarkable for the urbanity of his manners.

Sir Philip at length became desirous of extending his tour and visiting Naples. He had heard much of the gaiety and delicious climate of that capital, and he was moreover somewhat apprehensive, lest any suspicion should be excited by a more prolonged stay at Rome: for his intercourse with Paulina had been managed with great difficulty, and was continued at extreme risk.

For Naples accordingly he departed; oppressed at leaving Paulina, but more oppressed at her wretchedness in having lost him. The amusements of Naples soon effaced these disagreeable impressions. The gallery was more interesting than he had anticipated; the bay delighted, Mount Vesuvius astonished him; the women were beautiful and kind, as he always found

them, and Sir Philip felt that nothing was wanting to complete his satisfaction, except that which he never possessed and without which he could in reality enjoy nothing—a contented mind.

We shall not occupy our time in recording any events of his life in this dissipated city. He yielded to the influence of the same sky which had corrupted many a Roman heart. The shores of Baiæ and Pozzuoli, the Island of Tiberius, the excavated wonders of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the gigantic and mysterious temples of Pæstum had never beheld a more enthusiastic visitor.

Money is a powerful agent at Naples, and Sir Philip had plenty of it. It would

have been well for him if his purse had always been the only minister to his pleasures. At Naples it happened to be so, and in the gratification of his ruling passion, he was content to dishonour one of the Princes of the blood and to purchase, with an annuity, the attractions of an hour. In short, having taken Horace for his model and his guide during the few months which he passed there, he began to think of returning to Rome. Some strange reports, which had reached him, contributed to this determination:—he had heard that Paulina was about to be married to one of his most intimate friends who had arrived at Rome since his departure from it. This circumstance, or rather the bare suspicion of it, annoyed him, and he set out to ascertain the truth.

On his arrival he sought his friend and found that his information was correct. To this man he had formerly been much indebted; he knew his generous and confiding disposition, and could not bear that he should become so unsuspectingly the victim of a captivating but abandoned woman. In his first interview with his friend he discovered that he was completely ignorant of the real character of her whom he had chosen for his wife, and was about to contract an engagement pregnant with future and infinite misery. In this crisis, for the marriage was shortly to be solemnized, Sir Philip long hesitated as to the course he should adopt. He knew very well that to endeavour to dissuade Mr. Seymour from his purpose without assigning some satisfactory rea-

son would be useless, for honour and inclination equally governed him; and therefore, since he could not frame any plausible cause beside the real one, Sir Philip determined to communicate to his friend the whole secret of his connexion with Paulina. It is true that no selfish feelings towards her deterred him from this course. Paulina was not susceptible of constant or lengthened attachment. Her love for Sir Philip was all evaporated, and it was the new inclination which had lately seized her that she was now bent on indulging. He unbosomed himself to Mr. Seymour, and the marriage was consequently broken off; but the active and guilty conscience of Paulina did not long remain ignorant of the reason of her lover's inconstancy,

and she had no sooner discovered it than she sighed to be revenged. She had lost her lover—and a husband—and the preservation of character no longer was valuable. She revealed to her brother the story of her seduction by Sir Philip Gasteneys and called upon him, as her natural protector, to make him fulfil the pledge which she asserted he had given her of marriage. The passions of an Italian, when once excited, brook no control; considerations of expediency and worldly-mindedness never induce him to tolerate an injury which, having been inflicted, cannot be removed. The Count Lorenzo instantly complied with his sister's demand, and sent Sir Philip Gasteneys a communication, requiring him either to fulfil his

plighted faith to Paulina, or to satisfy the wounded honour of her family.

Sir Philip received this communication without surprise, for he had originally foreseen it—but not without great anxiety and pain. Marriage, of course, was out of the question; he who had gone so far to save his friend from what he considered a ruinous connexion, was not likely to contract it himself; and as his heart could not consent to the one, so his honour could not refuse the other alternative offered him by Count Lorenzo. He therefore accepted the challenge; but with a view of avoiding the necessary chance of injuring his antagonist if, according to the usual

custom in Italy they fought with swords, he proposed, under the pretext of being unacquainted with the use of the former weapon, that they should meet with pistols, intending, in that case, not to fire at his antagonist. This proposition was refused, and Sir Philip Gasteneys, against his will, saw himself reduced to the revolting necessity of adding possibly another and a greater injury to the one which he had already inflicted upon Paulina's house.

They accordingly met, and Sir Philip cautiously kept entirely on the defensive; when, luckily perhaps for his future safety, the foot of his adversary slipped and brought him in contact with the point of Sir Phi-

lip's sword. The wound was considered mortal although the sufferer still lived, and Sir Philip was obliged to fly.

He directed his course to Paris: along that road where the sea reflects in its glassy bosom the beauties of the coast, and the coast embellishes the wonders of the ocean. Where the vine and the olive, the orange and the myrtle, seem to verify by their close and familiar intercourse, the loves of the plants: where the pine rises in sober majesty, with its round and melancholy head, and contrasts with the elegant and slender forms of the aspiring cypress: on that shore where nature has lavished her bounties so profusely on man, and man has availed himself so proudly of

his superiority over nature : where the summit of the highest hill, and the surface of the lowest valley and the sides of the intermediate steeps are crowned with the temples of God, or hung with the palaces of the great, or studded with the neat and humble cottage of the peasant. But these charms were lost upon Sir Philip Gasteneys ; nature excited no emotion in, art had lost her influence over him. He passed by the venerable antiquities of Pisa without a sigh, and left behind him the pride and magnificence of Genoa without a thought. The calm serenity of Nice was unenjoyed, and he passed through the bustling activity of Lyons as the hearse is borne in melancholy stillness through the crowded streets. He had seen these places in hap-

pier and in better days, and his soul refused to renew its communion with them.

At Paris no course but that of reckless dissipation now seemed open to him, which could afford a chance of silencing his reflections or dispelling his remorse. He had arrived, by a long course of unpremeditated folly, at a point which awoke him to a sense of the horror and enormity of his past life, and the awful responsibility of his present situation, for he did not yet know that Lorenzo lived. His reflections were of the bitterest nature: he had caused much misery to others, poisoned the future happiness of his own life, was tormented with the oppression of guilt, yet was sensible of having done all in his power to avert it. What could be

expected of such a man, under such circumstances, in such a place as Paris? Nothing, but that he should seek to drown his reflections in the dissipation of that gay capital. Amongst these there was one to which he had hitherto been a stranger, which seemed calculated, by its engrossing influence, to occupy his mind and divert it from the recollection of the past, more effectually than any other. He was disgusted for a time with intrigue and it was therefore to the Goddess of the Salon that he now paid his nightly adorations. He became a gambler. How many men of minds more innocent and consciences less disturbed than Sir Philip Gasteneys, have fallen a prey to the pernicious attractions of hazard and rouge et noir! By little and little he became a

constant votary at the shrine where renovated Princes and fallen Republicans, courtiers and courtezans, sages and fools, heroes and saints, the favourites and the hunters of fortune paid their midnight devotions.

This could not last long without ruin: the same impetuous and generous disposition which had already been so fatal to him made him disregard his ill-fortune and throw away his good, so that he was soon reduced to great pecuniary inconvenience, or rather awakened to a sense of the serious losses, which in opposition to his cool judgment and mature consideration he had necessarily sustained. To his other reproaches were now added that of his having been the

dupe of heartless and designing villains. Night after night has he lain in his miserable bed, regretting the sums which he had lost, and still more bitterly bewailing the weakness and irresolution which had made him yield to temptation in spite of his conviction of its destructive end.

No man was more thoroughly sensible than Sir Philip Gasteneys of the utter impracticability by any system, or skill, consistent with honour, to win at these nefarious tables. There was no mode which he had not tried, and no plan which he had not adopted; more from the curiosity and the desire to keep on playing without ruining himself than the wish to gain: yet they had all failed, as he knew very well they would,

and the reflection which annoyed him most in pursuing this course was that of his want of resolution to abandon it. A hundred times had he determined, a hundred times sworn, never to play any more—a hundred times his firmness forsook him and his oath was broken. He now began to despise himself for this weakness; his temper became sour; his pursuits in literature and the fine arts, and his political interests in life interrupted and checked, and his days were intolerably wretched.

It was under these circumstances that he one day found himself in the gardens at Fontainebleau: reflecting on the fortunes of that great man, whose failings he admired and whose fate he deplored, when he ac-

cidentally met a family whom he had known in England in his early days, and who were come to Paris as was universally the fashion, at that time, to witness its follies and to transport them to their native soil. Of this family there were several daughters, one of whom, Lady Editha, had, even in his boyish years, attracted the favourable attention of Sir Philip Gasteneys. From that time, however, until now, he had seen no more of her and in his present mood and situation the adventure was agreeable if not interesting: he requested permission to visit them, and returned to his hotel more composed and cheerful than he left it.

He was not long in availing himself of the permission which he had obtained and

Lord and Lady Lincoln, good-natured people, encouraged him by their reception, to renew his visits: in a short time the company of Lady Editha seemed to render an evening at the Salon less essential to his amusement. "Seven's the main, eleven's the nick," a phrase of late so familiar to him, was odious in comparison to the soft words of praise and admiration, which now began gradually to escape him; calculation on the chances of the dice gave way to those on the probable advantages and hazards of wedlock, and Sir Philip, for the first time, asked himself if it were possible he should marry?

How absurd a question, and how certain is the man who answers it in the negative to renounce his words. Sir Philip did so, not

because he had ever formed any foolish determination to that effect nor entertained any prejudice against it, but simply, because having lived freely till then, having seen and known so many women, the slightest notion of entering seriously into such an engagement had never entered his head.

But so it was: Sir Philip had never been accustomed to control his inclinations, and so soon as he fixed them on any woman of virtue and strict principle, was he certain to offer himself in marriage. His nature was too generous and noble, his heart too good, his admiration of what was right too great, his sympathy with genuine virtue too sincere to allow him to divert any one from her sense of duty to gratify his own wishes,

and consult his selfish interests or scruples, if there were any mode of avoiding it.

In this position he shortly found himself with Lady Editha. She was one of those amiable and innocent beings whose great and rare attraction consists in their extreme simplicity, in their natural pre-disposition to virtue, and their utter ignorance of vice, in whom the strongest principle is united with the purest but most impassioned nature.

No sooner had Sir Philip discovered Lady Editha's character, than he immediately discarded all idea of dishonourable love. His respect inflamed his admiration ; and from this moment he did not feign, for any selfish consideration, but actually felt an honest and devoted attachment to her.

He desired to be united to her to secure his own happiness : he would have died to promote hers.

Having once contemplated this result, his notions of self interest likewise led him to observe the most scrupulous and decorous conduct towards her. His general opinions of female chastity were so unfavourable, and his expectations of what it ought to be so extravagant, that he did not imagine it to be an easy matter to meet with any one adapted to his views, and having found one, he would have thought it an injury to himself to have unveiled to her the depravity of our nature.

But although in this instance he was honestly and sincerely disposed and did

every thing, not from the wish to deceive, but to render himself really worthy of Lady Editha, her affections were not so easily obtained : she had heard, when a little girl, for she was now only seventeen, of the general character and dissipation of Sir Philip's life ; he had been the companion of her brothers in their extravagance and debaucheries, and had been represented to her, as they had been to others, full of every defect and devoid of every virtue.

Sir Philip was aware of this circumstance and could easily make allowance for it. He knew that he had done much to excite the unfavourable, nothing to gain the good opinion of the world ; that his errors were all manifest, his merits known only to his

friends; but this knowledge did not shake his consciousness of his own nature, of the intrinsic goodness of his heart, and he would not believe that any one so young and innocent as Lady Editha could be impenetrable to conviction, or insensible to the devotion which he was ready and resolved to pay her.

In executing intentions thus amiably and honourably formed, the previous acquaintance of Sir Philip Gasteneys with the world and his experience of female character, were greatly serviceable to him. In a short time he so completely abandoned, not in appearance but in reality, his former habits, so deserted his ancient acquaintance and adapted himself in all his thoughts, words and

actions, to the ideas and wishes of Lady Editha, as to succeed not only in convincing her that the world had misunderstood or misrepresented him, but in great measure in reforming himself; and this reformation he effected honestly. He was not the man to appear what he was not, when his object was open and legitimate; he loved Lady Editha truly, and would have held any sacrifice cheap which might have rendered him in his own estimation worthy of her.

That in the course of his addresses Sir Philip did sometimes play a hypocritical part, cannot be denied. What lover under any circumstances ever did otherwise? To Lady Editha he was generous and good-

natured—so he was to all the world: he convinced her of his proud and independent spirit, which nobody could doubt; he attracted her by his accomplishments which every one admired; gained her respect by his talents which no one denied. These, besides the advantages of his address and person, were passports which he presented to her, in common only with all the world; but which towards mankind in general were counterbalanced by other disadvantages which he concealed from her, or rather which he voluntarily corrected in her presence. His temper was naturally violent and impetuous; to her, he was at all times calm and submissive: his desires were volatile, his pursuits erratic, his tastes inconstant; to her he seemed fixed, from her he ap-

peared inalienable: on her, one would have thought, that all his present and his future hopes were fixed, she was the true thermometer of his existence.

There were two ingredients in the disposition of Lady Editha that were peculiarly difficult to manage: these were jealousy and suspicion, or, more properly speaking, the latter was included in the former, since it only evinced itself towards the object of her affections; in general no one could be more confiding, or less liable to distrust, than she was.

Full of ingenuousness and honesty herself, never harbouring the most remote idea of

deceit, she was naturally disposed to trust others; but with Sir Philip Gasteneys the case was different: she knew what he had been to some, and when once she began to open to her young heart the prospects of building its only happiness in this world upon him, she looked with narrowness and anxiety to his behaviour, and instituted a strict and not, perhaps, unnecessary comparison between his actions and his words.

Of this Sir Philip Gasteneys was well aware, and as he loved her sincerely, he was pleased to observe it, knowing very well that his conduct would prove irreproachable, and desiring to gain a just title to her confidence and respect before he obtained her

affections and, as he hoped, her hand. In this attempt, however, he had to encounter great and numerous obstacles.

One of the principal of these was the opposition which his mother, Lady Gasteneys, so soon as she heard of Sir Philip's intentions, evinced to them. She had conceived some unaccountable prejudice against the family of Lady Editha, whom she had never seen, and was determined to punish what she conceived to be the iniquities of the father upon the child—a resolution equally devoid of feeling and justice. With this view, under pretence of advocating her son's interests and welfare, there were no means, however base, unnatural or false to which she did not resort for the purpose of inter-

rupting the growing attachment between Sir Philip and Lady Editha, and to a very active and ingenious mind, peculiarly constructed to create embarrassments and originate doubts and spread suspicion, she added the plausible appearance of being influenced solely by a regard for the future happiness of her only child, and of one who had never injured her, and of whom no syllable of harm had ever yet been breathed.

This was a strong position from which to act upon the offensive. Lady Gasteneys wore a mask which none but those who had seen her put it on, could have penetrated: and under its protection she entered upon the most unnatural, unreasonable, and unrelenting persecution of her own offspring and

the legitimate and honourable object of his choice, that the annals of maternal cruelty and turpitude exhibit.

Lady Gasteneys was a very extraordinary woman, of great abilities and little judgment, of violent passions and the strictest principles, generous yet unjust, mean yet extravagant, charitable yet cold hearted, honourable yet false. Thus her measures though generally well taken were frequently unsuccessful, and her intention being good, her actions were almost invariably the reverse.

Prejudice and obstinacy, or, as she called them firmness, were her two great failings. In the present instance she had no one principle or object to consult, but that of pure

opposition to her son's wishes. Had Sir Philip fixed his choice upon any one else, she would equally have opposed him; for having devoted herself very much to him in his early years, she had conceived a notion that he ought to sacrifice every thing to her caprice in after-life.

She had no sooner discovered that all her efforts to dissuade her son from his intentions were unavailing, than she endeavoured by representing him in the most odious colours to Lord and Lady Lincoln to prejudice them against him. She described him as dissipated, extravagant, a gambler and an adulterer; she pointed out all the follies and errors of his past life which she magnified into crimes, and the little chance which she saw of his reformation.

These were artful and appalling representations, and it was the duty of Lord and Lady Lincoln, for the sake of their daughter's interest and happiness not to disregard them. They could not help viewing them with serious apprehension. Sir Philip soon perceived from their reserved manner and the constrained behaviour of Lady Editha, the effect which they had produced. He wrote to his mother to reason, to persuade, to implore but in vain ; he offered to wait any length of time, to submit to any ordeal ; he entreated that she would become acquainted with Lady Editha, and offered to abandon her for ever, if she did not approve of his choice when she knew the object of it. In vain ; Lady Gasteneys had made up her mind against the marriage without knowing why, and

on that very account continued in spite of reason, affection or discretion, to oppose it by the most violent means.

This unnatural behaviour at last drove Sir Philip to despair. He felt that for the first time in his life his inclinations had chanced to lead him into an honourable pursuit, and one for which he had nothing to reproach himself; and it was a poor inducement for him to continue in his honest and virtuous course, to be thus cruelly and undeservedly harassed and traduced. There is nothing so calculated to alienate the mind from virtue, as contempt and obloquy; nothing more dangerous than the example of vice triumphant. He felt and complained bitterly, and in the violence

of his anguish, he one day wrote a letter to his mother in which he wound up his reproaches with a curse.

Thus the affair proceeded ; his affections daily and hourly becoming more engrossed as his prospect of happiness became less visible. The charms of Lady Editha seemed to increase in proportion as they receded from him ; and his desire to possess her acquired strength, as his chance of obtaining her diminished.

She was indeed a lovely creature ! In the very blossom of youth, which every day seemed to freshen, when none of the alterations or imperfections of time could even be suspected. Her figure was of that

size which Cleomenes has sculptured, and its proportions, if possible, were more beautiful than his. She was the beau ideal of nature—a perfect combination of the most chosen parts. Her long, dark, thick brown hair, hung down like the tresses of Canova's Magdalen, or were bound up like Sappho's round her poetic head: and her breath was sweeter than the mingled perfume of the magnolia and myrtle.

But her greatest charm, after all, was her extreme innocence: the enchanting simplicity and perfect singleness of her heart. So unacquainted was she with vice, so unconscious and ignorant of its ways, that she never dreamt of its existence unless she was told of it, and knew of it

only in any one, as children know of events beyond the reach of their own vision, from the report of others : and this very innocence as it was attractive, so it was injurious to Sir Philip. She heard from her mother what Lady Gasteneys had said of him, and her young heart feared to love or to admire what she was told was wrong.

An unfortunate circumstance which occurred about this time tended very considerably to add to Sir Philip's embarrassment and distress, and to retard that progress, which in spite of all obstacles, he was gradually making in the affections of Lady Editha. She had not yet indeed, admitted that she loved him, as in her inmost heart she did, nor given a promise, which she knew

nothing could ever induce her to break, and for the disappointment of which if broken, she felt that nothing could atone : but they had conversed in a language which all the young understand and the old remember to have spoken, and there was little else wanting but the formal interference of the priest to make them one for ever.

Eighteen months had now passed away, and the patience of Sir Philip was on the decline. Lord and Lady Lincoln had finally declared, that nothing should induce them to give their consent to the accomplishment of his wishes until the sanction of Lady Gasteneys had been obtained : or until he was of an age legally to act

for himself; and Sir Philip having no longer any hope of the former was trying to reconcile himself to the idea of attaining his majority and ending his celibacy at the same time, when the event to which we have alluded occurred.

He was sitting one day in his apartment, after having had an interview of more than usual interest and happiness with Lady Editha, when his servant entered and said that a lady was waiting who immediately desired to speak with him. Sir Philip conjecturing that it was one of those visits to which he was frequently accustomed and for which he then felt himself in no suitable mood, desired that she should be refused admittance. The servant retired, ineffectually.

as it appeared with his master's excuse, for in another moment the door again opened, with some violence, and his eyes rested upon Mrs. Seton !

Grief and despair mingled with that expression of affection and tenderness which had once been and were still so dear to him, were in her countenance. All the fondness of his soul came over him, and as she threw herself into his arms, he clasped her to his bosom with the ardour of days gone by. She told him in a few short and interrupted sentences the cause and the object of her flight—they were shame detected and protection sought for : her husband had obtained possession, by breaking open her desk, of the proofs of her past guilt, and her continued

correspondence with Sir Philip, and had driven her with blows and imprecations from his door.

She had no other resource than to seek the seducer for whom she had lost husband and home, character and children. With tears and trembling she appealed to Sir Philip Gasteneys : could he refuse to cherish and protect her in this her hour of need ?

His resolution was immediately taken, as it always had been, in conformity with the original goodness of his disposition. He did every thing he could to repair the injury he had done her, consistently with his present situation, of which she was previously aware,

and resolved to keep the knowledge of this distressing occurrence a secret, if he could, from Lady Editha.

In this determination he was actuated by no unworthy motive of deceit ; his present dilemma was the unexpected result of an error into which he had fallen before he knew Lady Editha, and for which therefore he could not be held accountable to her ; and as he knew very well that she had heard of many of the events of his past life, and probably of this very one, in the way most unfavourable to his reputation, he did not imagine that he was deceiving her by this behaviour.

He immediately engaged apartments for

Mrs. Seton, and provided her with a carriage and servants, for delicacy both to her and Lady Editha would not allow him to reside with her in the same house or to have her seen in his equipages; and having thus as far as he could, endeavoured to shelter her from the cruel effects of ill-natured observation, and himself from the injury which his now unavoidable connexion with her might have upon his present plans, he continued as usual, his addresses to Lady Editha.

But the incident, from its publicity in England could not of course long escape observation. There are always abundance of people, under the guise of a sincere regard for one's interest, ready to communicate any intelligence which they know is calculated

to wound one's feelings or mortify one's pride ; and with the pretext of being one's best friend, prove themselves one's bitterest enemy.

Lady Editha was soon made acquainted with the arrival of Mrs. Seton in Paris, and her connexion with Sir Philip; and it produced the most violent and unfortunate change in her behaviour. She began to believe all the ill of Sir Philip which she had ever heard of him, but never discovered till now : she accused herself of ever having listened to him, reproached him for his treachery and deceit, and resolved never to see him any more.

How foolish is it in persons, and more

particularly in females, so subject to the vicissitudes of the passions to make resolutions of an extreme nature which it is almost impossible they should adhere to ! Justice at any rate required that she should not condemn Sir Philip Gasteneys for ever, without hearing his defence ; that she should, at any rate, see him *once more*, and so she did ; but it was in vain that Sir Philip pleaded his just excuse and told her with all the sincerity of his heart how falsely she suspected him, explained the real nature of his situation and reiterated his assurances of his readiness to abandon every thing, besides the duties of humanity, to convince her of his faith. Jealousy, the only real passion to which she was liable, had entered into Lady

Editha's soul, and made her alike insensible to reason or persuasion.

Sir Philip now began to feel the consequence of his past conduct: without any fresh fault of his own he was about to lose as the penalty of his previous guilt, the only object for which he cared to live. In this extremity the society of Mrs. Seton was no compensation to him, for she was, in fact, the blameless cause of his actual disappointment, and thus he sought again in those habits which, since his attachment to Lady Editha he had gradually relinquished, the means of diverting his present melancholy ideas. He resorted with renewed anxiety to the gaming table; his nights and days were

passed over the vain attempt to counteract the combinations, which under the name of chance, had been designedly contrived by heads much abler than his own, for his undoing. In the tumult of his anxiety and remorse he went from the superb apartments of the *Cercle des Etrangers* to the less respectable society of Frescati and the still more degraded receptacles of the Palais Royal: he flew from one to the other, as though there had been a separate divinity in each, one of whom at last he might conciliate.

It was at one of these midnight scenes that he was suddenly interrupted by the intelligence of his mother being dangerously ill. Her health had been for some time pre-

carious, but no apprehension of any serious result had till then been entertained: the thought that he had cursed her flashed across his mind, and the recollection that it might even then be too late to retract his imprecation and receive the pardon of his dying parent overpowered him. The box fell insensibly from his hand. His money and counters remained scattered on the table, and he rushed out of the room, as one distracted.

With the celerity of despair he ordered his carriage and departed: not a syllable escaped his lips till he arrived at Calais. It was the middle of the night; there was no regular vessel ready. He threw himself into an open boat, unconcerned and care-

less about every thing but to proceed. It was a dreadful night, and went hard with the mariners. "The rain descended, and the storm came, and the wind blew," but Sir Philip trembled not, for his thoughts were on other things. The bark rode tightly through the gale. Sir Philip was on shore. With breathless anxiety he rode to London, as the gamester keeps on throwing with the desperate possibility of winning against almost the certainty of losing. A few hours brought him to his mother's house, he kept his eyes bent down, lest he should see the windows closed. The door was opened by his old and faithful nurse. She spoke not, but tears were in her eyes. Lady Gasteneys was dead!

The shock was too great for his already agitated nerves. The fatigue and excitement which he had gone through ; the cold he had suffered on his journey and passage, for it was in the month of December, brought on a fever, which in a few days threatened to baffle the skill of his physicians. In this conjoint agony of body and mind, his thoughts were alternately directed to the mother whom he had lost, and the mistress whom he might perhaps never gain. To the former, from whom he had of late been so much estranged, he had never ceased to entertain the strongest affection, and now when he found himself alone in the wide world, so young, without relations or friends, the last descendant of his ancient

house, all her late unkindness was forgotten, and the memory only of her care and solicitude remained. As he became worse, his physicians thought it advisable to make him sensible of his situation, and without excluding hope, to apprise him of his danger. Indeed, Sir Philip had himself desired it : for he had no apprehension of death, no alarm at the idea of being transferred to another world. His conscience acquitted him of having deliberately committed any crime, from which his feelings revolted at the moment, and though he had grievously erred, he hoped to be forgiven both by God and man. He occupied himself with providing for the payment of his debts, and making such arrangements as he thought most just, and confirmed the will which he

had formerly made, as to the remainder of his personal property in favour of Mrs. Seton. What better reparation could he make to her ?

To Lady Editha he wrote the following letter :

“ Editha,”

“ The mother whom I cursed on your account is dead ; and on the bed of sickness, from which I shall probably never rise again, my last thoughts and feelings are dedicated to you.

“ In the course of that short life which I am now about to resign, I have done much wrong to others, but none, even in imagi-

nation to you ; and if there be any one to whom I may appeal to soothe and console me in my present agony, it is surely, you.

“ Editha, I have loved you very fondly. I was vain enough to hope, what I could not but desire, that I might perhaps make you happy, and that by devoting to you my life, as I should have done, and sacrificing my remotest wish to your interests and pleasures, I might have atoned through you for the past, and lived a better life for the future.

“ These visions are now fled ! Had I met you earlier in my career, I might have spared much misery to others, and to myself the repentance of the present hour.

“Farewell! could I but know that you would ever have loved me, had it pleased God to spare my life, or have thought me worthy of your affection, I should even now be happy. Could you but close my eyes and give me your blessing, I should be content: but if the bliss of ever beholding you again be denied me, at least let me be permitted to know that you have received these assurances of my devotion, and with them this ring,* so different from the one, I once fondly hoped to have given you: that you will sometimes deign perhaps to wear it, and think on him who sent it, with regret.—God bless you! Farewell.”

On the receipt of this letter, Lady Editha

* It was a mourning one.

was sensibly affected. She now perceived, what she had lately tried to conceal from herself, how much her future happiness depended on Sir Philip, and how little she could hope for in this world, divided from him. She induced Lord and Lady Lincoln immediately to set out for England, that she might listen to his prayers. Not a moment was lost: she stood by his bedside—she was with him—the angel whom he had invoked was come to save him. Her small delicate hand rested on his burning forehead; and in its soft and gentle pressure there was promise of life and joy.

From that moment Sir Philip Gasteneys gradually recovered. He had always been the creature of impulse, and this unexpected change in Lady Editha gave a new direction

to his physical frame, and strength to struggle with his malady. The speed with which he recovered was now to the surprise of his physicians and attendants, equal to the rapidity with which his illness had advanced on him, and in a short time he was able to look with confidence to future scenes of happiness and health.

The days which he now passed were the most tranquil and the happiest he had ever known. He was about to indulge, for the first time in his life, the warmest feelings of his nature without guilt or shame. He felt the unspeakable charm of delight accompanied by innocence.

Having in the meantime attained his twenty-first year, he made a handsome

settlement on Mrs. Seton who continued to reside in Paris, and was shortly after, (with every chance of enjoying that permanent and rational happiness, to which untoward events, and his too frequently uncontrolled passions had hitherto made him a stranger), united to Lady Editha.

THE END.

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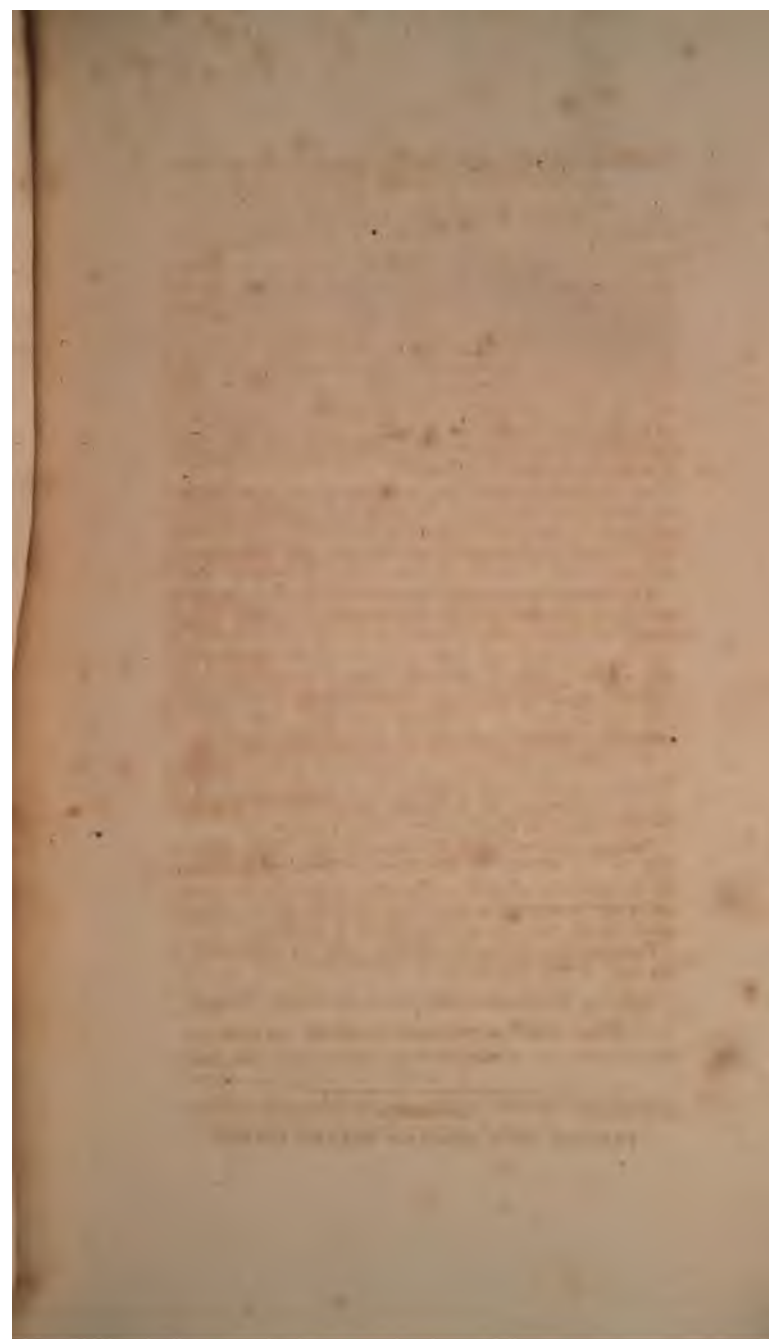
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